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Spirit and Economy

Pentecostalism and the Afterlives of Max Weber

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*To Marvin,
You inspired me to ask questions when others nodded their heads*

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Spirit and Economy: Pentecostalism and the Afterlives of Max Weber

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the historical intersections between Pentecostalism and Weberian sociology, beginning with the simultaneous publication of Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* and the emergence of Pentecostal spirituality at the Azusa Street Revival, and culminating in an analysis of recent claims that Pentecostals possess an equivalent to what Max Weber called "an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism," and consequently Pentecostalism may be a positive force for economic growth in developing countries. Leading research into these claims is the acclaimed sociologist, Peter L. Berger. It is concluded that these claims are unsubstantiated and untenable in their current form.

Furthermore, through the historical analysis it is revealed that a pattern has developed where Pentecostalism has intersected with Weberian sociology. This pattern can be seen by examining the rise of church-sect and secularization theories, their interactions with Pentecostalism, and the subsequent abandonment of these theories by sociologists. In this context, the recent application of Weber's *Protestant Ethic* to Pentecostalism follows this pattern, though it is yet to be determined what effect it will have on contemporary uses for *The Protestant Ethic*. It is argued that the emergence of a "Pentecostal ethic for development" based on Weber's *Protestant Ethic* has displaced the historical framework for studying Pentecostalism which depended heavily on the dialectic between Pentecostals and society. The historical analysis employed here seeks to identify these problematic trends, and therein reexamine the current trajectory of Weberian sociology and its application to the global Pentecostal movement.

Preface

This work maps the histories of Pentecostalism and Weberian sociology and raises critical observations about patterns that have become evident when they have crossed paths. Tracing more than one hundred years of development, this work presupposes that gaps are an inevitable consequence in this limited study, however the selective histories presented here are sincerely constructed without intention to misrepresent either the Pentecostal movement or Max Weber's legacy. Special attention is given to the work of Peter L. Berger, to whom I am in debt, beginning in the third chapter and composes a large part of the conclusions drawn. It will be noted in the final chapter that several criticisms of Berger's recent work are presented, however I feel it is necessary to point out here that this task has been approached with much trepidation. Berger's contributions to sociology, that span more than half a century, are immense. While it is beyond the scope of this research to present all of these contributions in detail, it is fully acknowledged by the author that Peter Berger's legacy is not defined by the criticisms raised here.

I would like to make a few notes about the use of certain terminology throughout this thesis. Firstly, the term "Pentecostalism" is used very broadly throughout and follows the definition set forth by Robert Mapes Anderson (1979) as "concerned primarily with the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit and the practice of spiritual gifts" (1979: 4). This definition avoids historical lineages and theological doctrines, which have become too complex and confusing to navigate, and leaves room for Christian groups that have culturally specific characteristics yet share in the Pentecostal experience. As such, Pentecostalism, as it is used here, should be understood to include such diverse movements as the Azusa Street Revival, the American healing revivals following World War II, the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s and 1970s, the Word of Faith movement, all subsequent forms of Prosperity Gospel, and the proliferation of African Initiated Churches (AICs). However, it is not taken for granted that these and other movements are, in fact, Pentecostal. A major component of this work is to expose the fluctuating boundaries of what constitutes Pentecostalism, often at the behest of social scientists to

satisfy their needs. As such the author does not take a position on exactly who and who does not belong in the Pentecostal rubric, but rather focuses on the problem of classification that has plagued the development of social scientific theory, particularly in the cases in which Pentecostals are involved. The term is used simply as an organizational tool and should not be misinterpreted as an ontological statement about any religious group. When distinguishing between older and newer forms of Pentecostalism I prefer the term “classical Pentecostals,” as used by Allan Anderson (2010) to describe Pentecostals “whose diachronous and synchronous links can be shown, originating in the early-twentieth-century revival and missionary movements” (2010: 17). However, I refrain from such terms as “neo-Pentecostal” and “neo-Charismatic” when describing newer forms of Pentecostalism and prefer instead the term “Charismatic” in a descriptive sense, which I believe adequately denotes the common phenomena that characterizes these newer forms of Pentecostalism.

The first and second chapters give mention to the Fundamentalist movement, which should be understood as a reference to the religious movement that emerged in the early twentieth century that called for a return to the “fundamentals” of Christianity, most notably, a literalist interpretation of the Bible. The adjectival use of the term “fundamentalist” is therefore used to describe elements pertaining to or emanating from that movement. Its use in this thesis does not imply an attitude or disposition related to radicalism or extremism, as it has come to mean in recent years.

This work is admittedly not comprehensive. Of course, no historical work covering two topics over such a span as is presented here ever could be. Analytically, it also disregards several valuable perspectives that may have contributed to the arguments presented here. Notably, I regret that a gender analysis has not featured in this work, as I believe it could be a valuable contribution to the discussion on Pentecostalism and development, however the application of gender theory was not feasible at this time, and I thought it would best be suited for a separate work that could give it the full consideration it deserves.

With these considerations, the following work is divided roughly along an historical timeline. The first chapter, “The Protestant Ethic and the Pentecostals,” deals with the historical period surrounding the publication of Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic*

(1904-1905) and the Azusa Street Revival (1906). The second chapter, “The Development of Sociology and the Study of Pentecostalism,” discusses selected developments in the sociology of religion after the publication of *The Protestant Ethic* that featured, or were particularly relevant for Pentecostalism. The central focus is on church-sect theory and the emergence the post-World War II healing revivals, which lasted until the early 1960s. The third chapter, “Secularization Theory and the Charismatic Revival,” slightly overlaps chronologically in order to provide the foundations of secularization theory, as well as the roots of the Charismatic Revival in the previous healing revivals. Analysis extends to cover the development of Prosperity Gospel in Pentecostalism as it gained popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the fall of secularization theory that became apparent in the 1980s and early 1990s. The final chapter, “Max Weber’s Pentecostal Ethic for Development?” is centered around contemporary debates about the use of Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* as a model to project the economic and social impact of Pentecostalism. Though some historical uses of the Protestant ethic are noted, focus largely centers on the contemporary debate which picked up in the 1990s and continues to the present day. It will be noticed that separate themes are devoted for each chapter, and therefore this work is not a strict historical chronology. However, the effort to keep a nebulous chronology serves an organizational role and contributes to the arguments of the conclusion, “Historical Patterns and Prospects for the Future,” which speak directly to the past, present and future of both the sociology of religion and Pentecostalism.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Max Weber's Ghosts

This project analyzes two histories that began only one year apart at the beginning of the twentieth century and now have intersected at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is argued that three sociological theories of Weberian origin (church-sect theory, secularization theory, and the Pentecostal ethic for development) have simultaneously depended upon, and ironically been made untenable by their attentions to, relationships with, and imaginings of the amalgam of groups placed by social scientists under the label of "Pentecostalism." The "ghosts" or "afterlives" of Max Weber here serves as a reminder that just as Albert Salomon wrote that Weber himself was in a "long and intense dialogue with the ghost of Karl Marx," sociologists since have been writing with the ghost of Max Weber on their shoulders. Though whereas Weber was presumably writing against apparitions of Marx, sociologists have often invoked the spirit of Weber for affirmation.

Max Weber's *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* (1904-1905), published in two volumes in 1904 and 1905, became a revolutionary and founding text for the sociology of religion. The subject of acclaim, criticism, and much debate *The Protestant Ethic* has inarguably played a central role in shaping the trajectory of sociological inquiry for more than one hundred years.

One year after Weber published his second installment of *The Protestant Ethic* in Germany, a religious revival broke out across the Atlantic Ocean in California. Not many took notice of the multi-ethnic and highly enthusiastic gatherings at Azusa Street in May of that year, and few would have predicted that this revival would spawn a worldwide movement with several denominations, and a century later be heralded the fastest growing religious movement in Christianity.

Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* also had humble beginnings. It would not be translated into English until twenty-five years after it was published, and almost a decade after Weber's death. Even then, it took some years before Weber's work to gain the notoriety to make it an interesting topic of debate amongst academics. But when it did,

the debates were furious and encompassed every aspect from discussing the validity of the general hypothesis, to monographs discussing the translation of a single word.

In 2008, the Centre for Development and Enterprise, located in the emerging market of South Africa published the results of a study which intended to uncover the economic and social potential of Pentecostalism in South Africa. The research was expansive and guided by a prominent sociologist of religion, Peter L. Berger, from Boston University. Through detailed surveys and interviews with Pentecostal congregants and leaders across the country, the CDE discovered that in the twenty-first century Pentecostalism may have significant potential to spur economic growth and create social capital in developing countries. The model used for comparison was none other than Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic*.

The story seems appropriate, almost ideal. *The Protestant Ethic* and the Pentecostal movement, born at the same time from humble beginnings, now at the height of success, find their way to each other after a hundred years to form a perfect, perhaps even destined, relationship. And not a moment too soon, as this union comes as a knight in shining armor for a world pummeled by the worst economic recession since the stock market crash of 1929.

But this fairytale deserves a closer look, and this thesis intends to do just that. As it turns out, *The Protestant Ethic* theory was not at the height of its success, but actually on the verge of becoming obsolete in modern sociology, serving mostly as an interesting historical landmark of where sociology once was. But what could have taken this iconic work out of the limelight? It was the repeated failures by sociologists to use it as a recipe for economic growth, in much the same way the CDE has done.

Also Pentecostalism's history is not quite as linear and homogenous as we might suppose. In fact, the term "Pentecostalism" is really a myth, a construct to help commentators make sense of a variety of trends and movements, many of which would not accept the label of "Pentecostal," but share some traits in common. But no single trait, other than those that can be applied to all Christians, can be found amongst all Pentecostals. Originally, Pentecostals set themselves apart from mainstream Protestant Christianity with spiritual exercises such as the practice of "speaking in tongues", a gift from the Holy Spirit that enables the recipient to speak a heavenly language miraculously

and fluently without learning it. Also, Pentecostals were known for wild, hysterical services that involved dancing, fainting (being “slain in the spirit”), convulsions, prophetic proclamations, exorcisms, and miraculous healings from all sorts of ailments.

Today, however, it is difficult to tell exactly what makes one a Pentecostal. A Pentecostal may believe that speaking in tongues is a prerequisite for salvation, but another may belong to a congregation that does not practice the gift at all. The gift of tongues could be heard among a group of Catholics, while a Baptist minister may receive the ability to heal incurable diseases. Sociologically speaking, early Pentecostals were only found amongst the lowest socioeconomic classes, and were particularly numerous among immigrant and marginalized populations. Today you may visit Pentecostal services that are clandestinely held in a person’s home. Or, if you rather, you could visit Joel Osteen’s Pentecostal church in Texas, that seats more than 16,000 people and was purchased and renovated for seventy-five million dollars. Some Pentecostal churches operate on a budget smaller than cost of owning a small pet, while others work like multinational corporations, owning private jets, or even producing a globally recognized brand name commodity, such as Gloria Jean’s Coffee. Aimee Semple McPherson was a prominent Pentecostal minister who was indicted for allegedly bribing a judge in her pending court case, but in 2011 President Jacob Zuma of South Africa appointed a prominent Pentecostal, Mogoeng Mogoeng, Chief Justice. There is no one representative Pentecostal church or person.

Pentecostalism was born out of protest to the large-scale industrialization, and the consequences thereof, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and was most attractive to those that suffered under free-market capitalism. Pentecostals were consistently portrayed as the “fringe” of American society (McCloud 2004). Often thought to be intellectually weak and incapable of surviving in the competitive free-market, early Pentecostals were described as escapists from society. Yet in 2008 the CDE determined that Pentecostals were better capitalists than most, and could drive South Africa into a new economic dispensation.

This thesis aims to add much needed perspective to the current trends of using Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* as a recipe for economic growth and identifying Pentecostals as the ideal cogs in the wheels of capitalist expansion. Before we accept this fairytale

marriage of Pentecostalism and *The Protestant Ethic* perhaps we should review their personal histories to see if they are as well suited for each other as we are told they are. This work is organized largely around historical periods, beginning with the early twentieth century and concluding with the recent views of Pentecostalism put forth by Peter Berger and the CDE at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Such a broad timeline will inevitably be filled with gaps, and as such is a selective history. However, this work is not strictly historical. This work makes use of the history available with the belief that this history may illuminate the prospects and problems for current trends in two fields, the sociology of religion and the study of Pentecostalism.

In the first chapter, “The Protestant Ethic and the Pentecostals,” the beginnings of Pentecostalism will be discussed: who were the Pentecostals, how were they described, and what were their characteristics. Additionally, an analysis of *The Protestant Ethic* text will be given with particular reference to the relevance for early Pentecostalism. Max Weber’s view of religious hysteria and rationalism, as it features in *The Protestant Ethic* will be discussed and compared with popular perceptions of Pentecostals at the beginning of the twentieth century. This is situated in the academic context out of which came the field of sociology of religion. The study of religion in America was heavily saturated with racist ideologies, which inevitably had an impact on how Pentecostalism was received, and how Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* was received.

In the second chapter the development of the sociology of religion in the United States will be analyzed with respect to the development of Pentecostalism from a revival at Azusa Street to a formal, institutionalized denomination. It was during this period that several developments in the sociology of religion began to take shape, largely due to the efforts of Talcott Parsons who provided American scholars with an English translation of Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* in 1930 and his own work on social action (1937). Simultaneously scholars began drawing on the works of Ernst Troeltsch and Max Weber to develop a typology of religious organization. Richard Niebuhr, the brother of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, played a prominent role in synthesizing Weber’s “ideal types” into what became known as “church-sect theory” through his *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929). The trajectory of church-sect theory included several studies of Pentecostalism and served to mold Pentecostalism’s image in the eyes of

intellectuals. These studies revealed what had been assumed, that Pentecostals came largely from the lower socioeconomic classes. Also, while these studies initially confirmed scholars' understandings of natural processes of religious organization, as expressed in church-sect theory, eventually Pentecostals would defy these understandings and cause problems for church-sect theorists. Pentecostalism as it developed after Azusa Street, became a movement with an awkward relationship between a faith focused on citizenship in heaven yet struggling with its own citizenship in America. One evangelist helped soften the Pentecostal image and helped facilitate the merging of Pentecostalism with the growing Fundamentalist movement. McPherson also contributed many innovations for the way in which religion was delivered and experienced. Her contributions in terms of the religious medium, message, and potential audience would have ramifications that can be seen in Pentecostal and mainstream Christian churches to this day. At the end of the chapter healing revivals of the 1940s and 1950s will be discussed as a precursor to the Charismatic Revivals of the 1960s and 1970s.

The third chapter, "Secularization Theory and the Charismatic Revival," discusses the rise of secularization theory and the near simultaneous explosion of Pentecostal expression through the Charismatic Revival. Secularization theories were planted firmly in the Weberian tradition. The work of Peter L. Berger (1966; 1967), which was on the forefront of developing secularization theory, will be presented and analyzed. It will be shown that secularization was not only a sociological theory, but an ideological stance which came to dominate the sociology of religion. The contemporaneous Charismatic Revival will be presented and discussed as the future evidence of sociologists who would reject the secularization theory, including its most significant advocate, Peter Berger. A close analysis of the Charismatic Revival will reveal a close relationship with what came to be known as Prosperity Gospel, a theological stance in which faith in God is demonstrated by monetary donation, which prompts God to miraculously bless the faithful with significant wealth and well being.

In the final chapter, I look at modern sociology of religion and global Pentecostalism. I briefly discuss the impact and eminence of Rational Choice Theory. Then I discuss the revival of neo-Weberianism and its peculiar relationship with Pentecostalism, a term that more often refers to a form of Christianity that emerged from

the Charismatic Revival of the 1960's than classical Pentecostalism. Ultimately, I demonstrate that both "Pentecostalism" and "the Protestant Ethic" are misnomers as they are used in the new trend of applying Weber's thesis to the religious phenomenon. Not only this, I also demonstrate that this new trend is not so new at all, inasmuch as "The Weber Thesis" has been misapplied to other religious movements before with disastrous and embarrassing consequences for sociologists. Furthermore I demonstrate that Pentecostalism as it is represented in these sociological experiments is not representative of the movement as a whole.

The fourth chapter, "Max Weber's Pentecostal Ethic for Development?" jumps to the present time and presents the merging of Weber's *Protestant Ethic* with the global Pentecostal movement in the developing world. The arguments will be presented and contextualized in the now expansive Pentecostal movement. Leading this trend is Peter Berger, who has since recanted his position on secularization theory, and is providing the theoretical framework to argue for an interpretation of Pentecostalism as practitioners of Weber's ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. The data to substantiate Berger's claims has been generated by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), which conducted an extensive study of the economic and social consequences of Pentecostalism in South Africa. A thorough analysis of the CDE's results will be presented and conclusions about the validity of Berger's hypothesis will be drawn. It will be demonstrated that the recent claims that Pentecostalism is a uniquely positive force for economic and social development are unsubstantiated.

While it may appear that the culmination of this work is leading to a critique of Berger's recent hypothesis blending Weber's *Protestant Ethic* and Pentecostalism, which is partly true, there is a much larger perspective that is being presented here. Taking the historical approach illuminates a startling, and perhaps worrying, discovery. The historical relationship between Max Weber's work and the Pentecostal movement, is a novel enterprise undertaken by this thesis with little expectation about the results that would be produced. However, research has revealed a pattern of historical meetings between Weberian sociology and Pentecostalism which have startling similar characteristics. This pattern will be presented and discussed in the conclusion of this thesis, and has potentially significant consequences for the future of sociology of religion

and the study of Pentecostalism. The critique of Peter Berger's hypothesis is likewise a novel contribution to the sociology of religion, as no single critique to this point has considered Berger's position (and the CDE's research) from a multiplicity of aspects as is presented in the final chapter. However, this is situated in the overarching pattern of the historical meetings of Weberianism and Pentecostalism, which should be seen as the principle contribution of the author.

The historical journeys of Pentecostalism and the "ghosts" of Max Weber reveal an affinity for the extreme. Pentecostalism was first regarded as an object of derision by sociologists, now it is heralded as the savior of the so-called Third World. Of course, this journey is not presented by Pentecostalism's sociological advocates of today. Rather, Pentecostalism is introduced as a *deus ex machina* that has suddenly appeared to solve problems for which few have solutions. However, Pentecostals were originally seen as those that capitalism rejected. Incompatible with capitalist enterprise they turned to ecstatic religion to forget their failures, though now the pendulum has swung and Pentecostals are now presented as the super-capitalists. Pentecostals once were thought to be the epitome "primitive" religion; now they are ultramodern.

This work utilizes the historical approach to ask relevant questions for the present state of sociology of religion, the use of Max Weber's work in contemporary sociological analysis, and understandings of the global Pentecostal movement. Perhaps more importantly, it shows the all-to-well-known repeating nature of history, and therein expresses reservations about the future trajectory of sociology of religion.

Chapter 2

The Protestant Ethic and the Pentecostals

Introduction

One year after the publication of the second half of Max Weber's *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* (1905) the world witnessed the birth of a new religious movement—Pentecostalism. Almost simultaneously both the state of religious studies and the face of religion itself embarked on a swift journey of change. Weber was heralded as “the Luther of the secular age” (Whimster 2007: 54), though ironically the twentieth century was not as much of a “secular age” as many sociologists anticipated. Pentecostalism's rapid spread was the proverbial curve ball unforeseen by secularization theorists.

Pentecostalism has subsequently become one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world, particularly in the developing world. Many sociologists of religion have turned to Max Weber's theories, as elaborated in his previously mentioned work, to understand the potential impact of the Pentecostal movement in developing countries. David Martin has carried out studies in Guatemala developing this theme, and Peter Berger has assisted the Centre for Development and Enterprise in conducting research in South Africa, thereby producing the pamphlet, *Under the Radar: Pentecostalism in South Africa and its Potential Social and Economic Role* (CDE 2008). Also, studies have taken place in Eastern Europe and Russia, analyzing the role of Pentecostal churches in revitalizing societies and economies left crippled by Communism (see Marsh 2009).

Like most religious movements, the origins of Pentecostalism were pieced together in retrospect, utilizing the clarifying lens of history to give organization where spontaneity dictated the development of the movement. Perhaps even Weber himself would have included a section on “Pentecostal Sects” in his essays, had he also had the benefit of hindsight. Though more likely, he would have written about the Pentecostals under the section titled “Methodism,” for Pentecostalism was more rightly labeled a

revivalist movement stemming from the “Holiness Movement” within the Methodist tradition.

However, much has changed in the religious and economic landscapes since 1906. Pentecostalism has seen most of its growth in the developing world, and sociologists rarely use the term “capitalism,” but rather opt for words like “development” and “modernization” as suitable replacements. The advent of globalization and instantaneous transfer of information further complicates the Weberian perspective on Pentecostalism in the twenty-first century. Nonetheless, it seems appropriate that sociologists of religion turn to one of the fathers of the field to attempt to answer the same question he posed more than a century ago: What impact does religion/religious faith have on economics, economic activity, and economic behavior?

This chapter visits a time in which a link had not yet been made between Weber’s theorizing about a Protestant Ethic and Pentecostal spirituality. This chapter starts at the beginning, when Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* and Pentecostalism exploded on to the academic and religious scenes, respectively. Conveniently, this takes us to the same period: the beginning of the twentieth century. This chapter is divided into five sections. In this first section I will draw attention to the intellectual and political contexts in which Weber produced *The Protestant Ethic*. In the second section a brief summary of the origins of Pentecostalism will be presented along with the nature of early Pentecostalism, with particular attention drawn to how Pentecostalism was characterized by onlookers of the movement. In the third section I will analyze Weber’s discussion of “emotional” forms of religion as discussed in *The Protestant Ethic* and draw comparisons with expressions of early Pentecostal spirituality. In the fourth section comparisons will be made between Weber’s understanding of religious conceptions of “calling” (*beruf*) and early Pentecostal understandings and uses for the same term. Lastly, I summarize early Pentecostal attitudes toward “the world” and contrast those with Weber’s understanding of the general Protestant worldview that permitted the coalescence of a religious and work ethic.

Max Weber in Context

Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* was published amid growing debates about the origins and causes of modern Capitalism. Karl Marx opened the discussion with his critical analysis of capitalism in his work, *Das Kapital*, published in 1867. As Marxist thought evolved into the political ideology of Communism, other scholars jumped to follow up on the groundwork laid by Marx. Chiefly among them was Werner Sombart, who published the massive treatise, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, in six volumes in 1902.

Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, published in two essays in 1904 and 1905, respectively, should be seen largely as a response to Sombart's *Modern Capitalism*. In fact, upon first publication, Weber used quotes to denote “*Geist*” or “Spirit” in the title of his work, because Sombart had actually introduced the term two years previously when referring to a “spirit of capitalism” (Whimster 2007: 34). Sombart credited the formation of the “spirit” of modern capitalism to the emergence of “*auri sacra fames*,” a lust for gold that developed as a result of the opening of trade routes to the East and the new found wealth brought to the old world from colonies. This lust for gold developed into an “unbridled acquisitive urge” that spurred a change from traditional forms of capitalism that were fueled solely by models of supply-demand, to modern capitalistic enterprises which were fueled by motives to turn a profit. Sombart considered, but resolutely dismissed, religious communities, and specifically the sects of Protestantism, as the starting point for the development of modern capitalistic spirit. He claimed, “the Protestant system of religion is the consequence rather than the cause of modern-capitalist spirit” (Whimster 2007: 36-37).

Weber, therefore, saw it his task to correct the problem of causation in Sombart's *Der moderne Kapitalismus* by pinpointing the origins of the “spirit” of modern capitalism to the “worldly asceticism” of the Protestants. In this light, *The Protestant Ethic* is more rightly an attempt to answer the questions “of the psychological conditions which made possible the development of capitalist civilization,” rather than the question alluded to earlier, “what impact does religion have on economic systems?” (Tawney 1958: I[b]). Because of the valuable insight into the sociology of religion that *The Protestant Ethic* offered, it is often mistakenly viewed as a study of religion. However insightful his

analysis of religion was and is, the context in which he turned to the study of religion to produce *The Protestant Ethic* was to enhance his study of modern capitalism, not vice-versa. Through contextualizing *The Protestant Ethic* one clearly sees Weber in a series of debates about the origins of modern capitalism. However, because of the substance of his work, the magnitude of his claims, and the implications of his theories, scholars over the century have interpreted and re-interpreted *The Protestant Ethic* to the point that in some cases it became irrelevant *why* Weber wrote what he wrote; and in other cases Weber's motivation has been construed to support one or another claim to a "true" interpretation of the seminal work. As Delacroix and Nielson (2001) point out, "irrespective of what Weber may have himself believed or written, there is a dominant interpretation of *Protestant Ethic* that has taken a life of its own" (2001: 510). The "Common Interpretation" of Weber's work has replaced the work itself, and can be referred to almost directly, bypassing the original text. Delacroix and Nielson continue by saying:

The task of discovering what Weber really meant may be hopeless for several reasons: the subtlety of his argumentation, his sometimes idiosyncratic expository style, obscurities resulting from Talcott Parsons' translation, the complex relationships between the comparatively self-contained essay and the rest of Weber's massive and junglelike work on religion, and, last but not least, the quasi-sacred status that Weber's opus in general and *Protestant Ethic* in particular have acquired in the contemporary social sciences. (2001: 510)

Possibly equally as important as the intellectual context in which Weber wrote was the political context of Germany at the time. One point of interest for German politicians and economists alike was the influx of Polish immigrants into Germany and the effect on the national economy. Weber joined the Verein für Sozialpolitik, a German society of economists, and quickly won acclaim by speaking out against Polish immigration to Germany. Zimmerman's article, "Decolonizing Weber," illuminates the political climate in which Weber was deeply entrenched. Zimmerman begins his essay with the bold statement, "Max Weber was an imperialist, a racist, and a Social Darwinistic nationalist,

and these political positions fundamentally shaped his social scientific work” (2006: 53). Zimmerman is adamant about the consequences this left for Weber’s legacy as a scholar:

Weber’s imperialism and racism drove the development of what is today recognized as ‘Weberianism’: the role of values in society and social science and the cultural roots of rationalization, especially as it bears on the development of capitalism. (2006: 55)

As we take a closer look at the rise of Pentecostalism, this particular aspect of Weber’s scholarly work will become more relevant to the reader. Pentecostalism stands alone in its time as a movement born of interracial collaboration and spurred on by the poor working class. Zimmerman’s arguments demonstrate that racism and imperialism, though rampant in German political thought at the time, were integral for Weber, and even were championed through Weber’s scholarship. Zimmerman credits Weber as the forerunner of “neo-racism” which sought to use ethnic or cultural differences to discriminate, rather than biological evidence. “The concept of civilization, though seemingly flexible, functioned for Weber to separate groups as surely as the concept of race did” (Zimmerman 2010: 214). Weber employed these divisions in his *Protestant Ethic* to derive a theory of labor based along these civilizational boundaries rather than models of individual economic behavior as was common at the time. The relevance was clear for the political interests of the Verein für Sozialpolitik: *The Protestant Ethic* formed a clear basis on which to discriminate in favor of (presumably) Protestant German workers and against (presumably) Catholic Polish workers seeking a better life in the free labor market Germany offered. In the words of Andrew Zimmerman, *The Protestant Ethic* meant that “Weber and his colleagues in the Verein für Sozialpolitik could lay to rest their concerns about the ill effects of free labor within Germany, and worry instead about preventing corruption by Polish and other inferior workers” (2010: 213-214). Though scholars have tended to focus on Weber’s contribution to social and economic theory, few scholars have recognized the practical perspective Weber was simultaneously offering to solve labor issues in the German context at the time. Zimmerman’s review of Weber’s nationalistic concerns about keeping Polish workers out of Germany not only

reveal a racist disposition in Weber's ideology, it also reveals his target audience: his colleagues in the Verein für Sozialpolitik and policymakers in Berlin.

Weberianism in America

Max Weber was well aware of shifting dynamics in the labor arena. He had been dealing with a similar, though distinct, situation in Prussia prior to his trip to America. In 1892, Weber published *Situation of the Agricultural Workers in East Elbian Germany*, in which he, despite the title's suggestion, does not speak directly to working conditions, but focuses on broader issues associated with the shift away from traditional sharecropper models and toward agrarian capitalist models of production (Ringer 2004: 42).¹ Weber recognized that wage labor offered workers a greater degree of freedom than the traditional model, but this freedom divested the worker from his trade, weakening his position from a form of investor to an employee. As an employee the laborer was under constant threat of losing his job to someone who was willing to work for less money. The result was worsened conditions for laborers. The laborers, having experienced the "freedom" offered by joining the ranks of the proletariat, could no longer return to dependency on a lord, even if it provided him a better quality of life. Weber witnessed what he believed to be "psychological changes" brought on by agricultural capitalism, chief of which was the "powerful and purely psychological magic of 'freedom'" (Ringer 2004: 44). The irony would be brought full circle in *The Protestant Ethic* when Weber describes the same mechanisms that lured the laborer with notions of "freedom" to modernity's "iron cage."

His work on Prussian agriculture did draw notice from American onlookers and it was on this basis that Weber made his first and only trip to the United States in August of 1904 to deliver a lecture on "German agrarian problems in the past and present" at the

¹ The traditional sharecropper (*Instmann*) had a special relationship with his lord (*Gutsherr*). Because the sharecropper lived on the land and received a percentage of the harvest his work was also an investment, thus tying his fate to that of his lord. While the sharecropper was dependent upon his lord the traditional system ensured at least some degree of mutuality. However, it became more profitable for landowners (and more appealing for laborers) to offer wages for worker services. This gave workers a greater degree of autonomy and protected them from weak harvests. This also encouraged landowners to seek laborers that would work for as little money as possible (typically Polish immigrants in Eastern Germany). What resulted were the mass immigration of Polish laborers and a large-scale emigration of Germans away from the rural East (Ringer 2004: 43).

World Academic Congress, part of the World Exhibition held in St. Louis (Radkau 2009: 566). He extended his visit and toured America until December of that same year, after which he returned home to Germany to complete the second part of *The Protestant Ethic*, which appeared in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* the following year. Despite his presentation at the World Exhibition and his extensive connections in America (he formed relationships with academics such as W.E.B. Dubois and William James, in addition to having family residing in South Carolina), *The Protestant Ethic* attracted relatively little attention from American sociologists until almost a decade after his death. This was largely the case because the work was not formally translated into English until Talcott Parsons took up the task in 1930 (Johnson 2007: 44-45). Additionally, the Sociology of Religion, as a field of study, had not yet taken a coherent form in the Americas prior to 1930 (Blasi 2007: 39). Anthony Blasi has analysed American dissertations in the sociology of religion prior to 1930 in his book *American Sociology of Religion: Histories*. The first of the twelve dissertations he presents, written in 1895 by Dewitt Lincoln Pelton at New York University, reads “like an editorializing, almost sermonic, tract” (Blasi 2007: 16). Only after the turn of the century do we see a definitive shift in the style and tone of writing that resemble those of the sociology of religion today.

This shift toward a more scholarly and phenomenological approach to the scientific study of religion in the social sciences came through the influence of the University of Chicago. The “second Chicago School,” as it is sometimes called, was at the forefront of sociology of religion, and in sociology generally, in America throughout the twenties, in large part due to Albion Small, who founded the first department of sociology in the United States and *The American Journal of Sociology*. Max Weber visited Chicago in route to St. Louis in 1904 and described the city as comparable to “a man whose skin had been peeled off and whose intestines were seen at work” (Bulmer 1986 : xvi). The city would return the compliment by hosting the first English translation of any of Weber’s works, *A General Economic History*, in 1927. It was Frank Knight, a well-known professor of economics who notoriously had nothing to do with sociology or sociologists, but exceptionally had a profound interest in Max Weber, who translated Weber’s text (Bulmer 1986: 193). Weber’s works had eluded Small, which is somewhat

strange considering Small's own interest in German economics (he studied at the universities of Leipzig and Berlin) and the fact that he worked closely with Georg Simmel, who was on the editorial board of Small's journal and a close personal friend of Weber. Nonetheless, it was not until 1924 that Weber's name found its way into an article published in *The American Journal for Sociology* through a reference provided by Heinrich Maurer. Maurer was also located in Chicago and published in 1924 the first in a series of articles called "Studies in the Sociology of Religion." Maurer's achievement of being the first to present a summary of Weber's *Protestant Ethic* has outlasted the work itself, which has been largely forgotten in the field. The article, subtitled "The Sociology of Protestantism," is largely devoted to summarizing the theories of Weber and Troeltsch (Maurer 1924). Maurer adds little in way of a critique of *The Protestant Ethic* other than emphasizing the need to differentiate between Weber's understanding of Calvinism and Lutheranism, the latter for which Weber was referring to German Lutheranism, which was considerably different in the American context (Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 97). The article's primary significance is in that it came before Talcott Parsons's translation of *The Protestant Ethic*, and therefore stands as the only American assessment that was free from Parsonian influence (Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 96).²

Though there is evidence that *The Protestant Ethic* had attracted some attention among American scholars, the implications of the thesis were not fully realized until Talcott Parsons explored these implications in his own work of a voluntaristic theory of social action in 1937 (Johnson 2007: 44). It was through this work, which will be explored in the next chapter, that we see the influence of *The Protestant Ethic* on the trajectory of sociology of religion as a burgeoning sub-discipline. When Parsons released the first English translation of *The Protestant Ethic* in 1930, there was a flurry of responses to Weber's thesis, though almost exclusively from disciplines other than sociology. The lone exception is Harold Becker's review, "the only specifically social scientific assessment of Parsons' translation published at the time of its appearance" (Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 103). Becker, who was proficient in German and the original

² Kemper Fullerton wrote an article entitled "Calvinism and Capitalism" for the *Harvard Theological Review* in 1928 that summarized *The Protestant Ethic*. Though this article also predates Parsons's translation, it is generally not regarded as "Pre-Parsonian" because Fullerton, being at Harvard Divinity School with Parsons, appears to be writing in anticipation of Parsons' translation.

text, says that Parsons “deserves high praise for his excellent rendering” (cited in Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 103). Becker alludes to the popularity and importance of the Weber thesis that had previously been available to scholars with a good command of the German language, though the sociologist contextualizes the utility and notoriety among students of “economic history,” not sociology (cited in Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 103).

Swatos and Kivisto make three important observations about the appearance of Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic* via Talcott Parsons in 1930. Firstly, at the time there appears to be no critical response to the translation itself. Secondly, the thesis itself was generally appreciated among scholars who reviewed the work after the translation was published. Lastly, Parsons’ insertion of an “Author’s Introduction” before the main text of *The Protestant Ethic*, an introduction that he borrowed from Weber’s sociology of religion case studies written in 1920, was ignored by commentators. Later scholars would take exception to the liberty taken by Parsons in this case, as it hides the changes in Weber’s own position between 1904-05 and 1920 (Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 108). The most interesting observation is perhaps the paucity of attention the work attracted in the social sciences, as compared with other fields of inquiry. The text that would inspire scholars to retrospectively adorn Max Weber as one of the founding fathers of the sociology of religion was hardly recognized as a sociological text in America for more than thirty years after its publication.

Race and Religion

The sociology of religion may have been slow to develop as a legitimate sub-discipline, but if that is the case then it had some help from studies in psychology, which in many ways handcuffed sociologists of religion due to the impact and widespread acceptance of psychological theories of race and religion. Curtis J. Evans’ book, *The Burden of Black Religion* (2008), sheds light on the trajectory of the social sciences in the early twentieth century as governed by theories that would intend to undermine efforts of those that would fight for equality for African Americans. Evans elaborates,

The new social sciences provided academic support and a university-based ideology (particularly in the North) for assertions that blacks were unfit to vote

and incapable of participating in the civic life and governance of the nation. “Emotionalism,” which emerged as the principal discourse of black religion in the new language of psychopathology, was then a clinical and seemingly dispassionate way of dissecting and denigrating black life so as to absolve interpreters of appearances of animus toward blacks and to set these academics apart from the popular prejudices and emotional outbursts of their ‘primitive’ Southern white brethren who were lynching blacks with astonishing levels of cruelty. (2008: 106-107)

Though Evans’ intention is to demonstrate detailed and thorough racist ideology that guided the social sciences in this period, his work is of particular relevance to this study, as it offers an explanation for the lack of social scientific research on Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century.

Evans, with support from Richard Hofstadter (1955),³ argues that Herbert Spencer’s *Principles of Sociology* (1885) had a profound impact and lasting influence on American social thought for decades after it was published in England in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the book Spencer goes to considerable length to link emotionalism with primitivism, as a way of bolstering his claims that the less emotional (i.e. more civilized) races were predisposed to rule over “The Primitive Man-Emotional” (2008: 109). Evans aptly demonstrates that this tie between emotionalism and primitive culture was meant to expose “biological and cultural ‘weaknesses’” of less civilized peoples, and therein justify white domination (2008: 109). In this process, emotionalism became “a way of describing black religion” and emotionality in religion came to imply a lack of “morality, civility, and ethics” (2008: 109, 117).

This was a typical route among academics to arrive at a “scientific” view of other races, which is ultimately racist, though distinguished from the more distasteful, overt racism represented by white American Southerners who participated in lynching (2008: 105). The effects of this scientific racism can often be more detrimental and longer

³ For a thorough look at the works that support Evans’ argument on the construction and use of race in academia, see Richard Hofstadter’s *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1955), George Stocking Jr.’s *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (1968), John S. Haller Jr.’s *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859-1900* (1971), and Lee D. Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (1998).

lasting than overt discrimination and prejudice based on skin color. Spencer's argument serves as an ideal example of how this is possible. Firstly, he argues that "emotionalism" is linked to primitive (inferior) culture and behavior. Secondly, he argues that Africans are emotional. If one only accepts the first argument, but not the second, it then only requires a display of emotion from a person of color to provoke a prejudiced attitude. It therefore became an even more complicated process to expel racist attitudes, because one had not only to arrive at the conclusion that "blacks are not inferior to whites" but then question the entire framework in which social scientists worked. Even after Spencer's work fell into disrepute, his suggestion that emotionalism was a primitive trait remained embedded in social thought.

Many more followed Herbert Spencer's work with the aim to bolster the argument for distinguishing between rational (superior) religion and emotional (inferior) religion, usually with implicit intentions to justify discriminations against darker skinned peoples. Through the scholarly lineage of people like John Spencer Bassett, Joseph Alexander Tillinghast, George Barton Cutten, Charles Eliot and others,⁴ a stage theory of religion was put forth that articulated the evolutionary stages of religion from the primitive/emotional to the rational/spiritual (Evans 2008: 121). This evolutionary view of religion resulted in the denigration of bodily movement and ecstatic religious experience while simultaneously typifying orthodox Protestantism as scientific and modern (2008: 121).

But theories of evolutionary religion were closely tied to theories of human evolution which also had endemic racist tendencies, seeking to scientifically assert Caucasians as a more evolved race than Africans. Consequently, religious expressions such as "singing, whistling, dancing, and shouting emotions" were symptoms of the lesser evolved psyche of Africans (Kilgo 1903, in Evans 2008: 122). This offers a slightly different perspective, though still consistent with the assumption that emotional religion is inferior to emotionless religion. Correlating emotional religion with a "lesser evolved" race would have proved immediately problematic had these scholars had any sense of popular religious revivals of their day, which displayed the ecstatic capabilities of whites

⁴ See Evans (2008) for a detailed account of the contributions of various scholars in the establishment of a stage theory of religion.

as well as blacks. It should have been evident, at least from the time of Azusa Street, that religion and religious expression was not dependent upon “racial qualities” and theories of the like developed by psychologists, and was better approached from a sociological perspective. But this would have required a sociological perspective divorced from the psychology of the day, which was not to be found. This was also in contrast to Max Weber’s assertion that the emotional character of Calvinism had not detracted from the believer’s ability to be rational, as these scholars understood emotionalism as evidence of a lack of self-control and self-discipline.

Frederick Douglas Davenport’s *Primitive Traits in Religion Revivals* (1905) dealt exclusively with the issue of emotionalism in religion which he viewed as a threat to “the interest of religious and social progress” (1905, cited in Evans 2008: 130). Davenport stated that his charge was to “segregate the primitive and baser elements in the revival” (Davenport 1905: ix). Working from the foundation of mental evolution, Davenport saw religious revivals, and their emotional outbursts, as an exercise in retrogressive behavior, and thereby obstructing the progress of religion. This was explicitly applied to African American religion. Speaking about the “primitive imagination,” Davenport says, “in its early period it is very crude, as it is to-day among the negroes of the United States, whose religious thinking, both lay and clerical, is very frequently one long stretch of most astounding images” (1905: 15). This connection between African Americans and a primitive, inferior religion is further elaborated in *Primitive Traits*:

A large part of his conscious life is devoted to propitiating the friendly, and warding off the hostile, spirit. Hence the rapid growth of charm and magic, medicinemen, exorcists and conjurers. These superstitions have made their way so deeply into the mind of the race that they are by no means rooted out even in highly developed communities. And among primitive people everywhere they show much of their pristine strength. The negro people in the South to-day, for example, are enveloped in a cloud of superstition. The belief in signs, charms, spells dreams, except among the few intelligent members of the race, is very general. (Davenport 1905: 16)

Notice that in Davenport's writing it is not merely the religion practiced by African Americans that is primitive, it is the African American people that are primitive. Furthermore, the dichotomy between primitive vs. civilized is analogous to unintelligent vs. intelligent. This, however, is not mere innuendo, as is evident when Davenport later says that "no one doubts, I suppose, that in the negro people, whether in Africa or America, we have another child race" (1905: 45). Hence, religion here was viewed as symptomatic rather than problematic. Davenport also claimed that, though religion held a central place in African American life, it was completely ineffectual in the instruction of morality. Davenport saw the evidence for this, strangely, in the crimes of Whites against blacks. "The wide prevalence of the crime of lynching among the whites of the South testifies eloquently to the reign of lust among the blacks, and as for petty thieving, it is so common as often to excite only humorous comment" (Davenport 1905: 58). *Primitive Traits* serves as a portrait of American academia at the turn of the century that was completely ingratiated with racism.

One important aspect of the efforts to ground racism in a scientific framework was the positing of "black religion," which had become synonymous with uncivilized, unbridled, and overly emotional religion outside the scope of American religion altogether. By identifying and locating emotional religion as an African phenomenon, such displays were de facto un-American. In almost every instance Pentecostalism qualifies as, and was presumably seen as, a "black religion." Reports of the Azusa Street revival clearly reveal the participation of whites, blacks, and immigrants of various ethnicities. As Pentecostalism spread and established itself into various denominations, the lines of which were often drawn by racial segregation, there was no place in the social scientific framework for white Pentecostalism, as it negated the consensus of the academic establishment that emotional religion was a symptom of the pathological condition that was to be "black." Emotional religion was so closely associated with "black religion" that the Pentecostal movement was practically overlooked by scholars of religion, leaving the history and development of the movement that began in America to be kept by ministers and believers. This perspective that Evans offers of the construction of religion in academia around the issue of race has not yet been put to use when reconstructing Pentecostal history. Early Pentecostals were long seen as detached from

civil society due to millenarian beliefs and eschatological hopes, which suggests Pentecostals were the agents of their own non-involvement. The implications of Evans' work question the degree to which early Pentecostals were agents in their detachment from civil society, considering the extravagant efforts to denigrate and prove emotional religion unfit for civil society.

Sean McCloud (2007) traces out this history of attention to “biological” aspects of religion and the subsequent shift to the rise of “culture” and social environment as key factors in understanding religious belief and behavior. In *Divine Hierarchies* (2007) McCloud demonstrates how this shift equated in the move away from racist ideologies of primitive religion to deprivation theories of religion. Naturally, Pentecostals were at the center of these ideological shifts, yet it is not clear that they benefited from it.

The Birth of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism exploded onto the religious scene with the revival that broke out on Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906. Hollenweger draws a clear lineage of theological tradition starting with John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, through the American Holiness Movement of the mid-nineteenth, to the emergence of Pentecostalism at the beginning of the twentieth century (Hollenweger 1972: 21-22). The Holiness movement was a revivalist campaign within the Methodist Church that placed special emphasis on John Wesley's belief in “sanctification,” the notion that after a Christian had been saved he could attain another level of spirituality in which the Christian is sanctified, or purified from sin. It was precisely this belief in sanctification that evolved into what the Pentecostals termed “Baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

Though Pentecostalism has ancestral roots dating back to the founding of the mainstream Christian church of Methodism, its emergence could not be described as a gradual shift in the theological tradition. Just a few years before the Azusa Street revival, Charles Fox Parham was leading a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas when he, and several of his students, began to speak in strange tongues during a worship service. Convinced that this experience was the very same experienced by the apostles and recorded in the book of Acts in the Bible, Parham believed that “speaking in tongues,” or glossolalia, was a gift of the Holy Spirit and a clear sign (or evidence, as Parham claimed) to the

believer that he had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was Parham's student, William J. Seymour, that traveled to Los Angeles in 1906 at the request of Neelly Terry, a woman pastor of a local Black Holiness church (Hollenweger 1972: 22). A revival ensued that would later be called "Pentecostal," referring to the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts in which the apostles were gathered in an upper room and spoke with "tongues of fire."

The practice of speaking in tongues, along with ecstatic and emotional worship rituals, gave Pentecostalism, early on, a reputation associated with radicalism and fanaticism. Pentecostalism, in its beginnings, was largely a religion of the poor and "society's disenfranchised," to borrow a phrase from Harvey Cox (1995: 24). Secular media were quick to vilify the movement with headlines such as "Religious Fanaticism Creates Wild Scenes" and "At all Night Meetings in Azusa Street Church, Negroes and Whites Give Themselves Over to Strange Outbursts of Zeal" (Robeck 2006: 125). Grant Wacker writes "To outsiders the turbid emotionalism of radical evangelical meetings, or at least those that marked the most leftward wing of the movement, seemed paramount. And with good reason" (2003: 1). The reports were overwhelmingly pejorative if not libelous, such as the headlines "Holy Kickers Carry on Mad Orgies" and "Crazed Girls in the Arms of Black Men" (Robeck 2006: 126). There is no real evidence that any sexual acts took place during the Azusa Street Revival meetings, but that did not stop the media from reporting it in order to add to the barrage of slander against the Pentecostals. The exuberance on display in the Pentecostal meetings combined with slander from various newspapers aroused fear among many outsiders, and police were occasionally called in to break up the services. One reporter commented:

As such exhibitions are not allowed even in the tough resorts in the city, the police were forced to call a halt to this part of the 'holy kickers' rites. When the women were forced to desist they became wildly hysterical and screamed and preached until they sank exhausted and nearly unconscious to the floor. (cited in Robeck 2006: 176-177)

The fear perpetuated by newspaper reports grew as the movement began to spread to other parts of the city. Glenn Cook delivered a sermon in July of 1906 at Monrovia

Holiness Church, just east of Pasadena, California, about the text in Genesis 22 in which Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his son Isaac. When rumors of the service had reached a climax, local citizens finally asked police to step in. The Evening News reported:

For want of a section of the law under which to prevent meetings, authorities at Monrovia fear that 'holy Rollers' gatherings there will result in offering their babies as human sacrifices. Marshal Miller, the chief police officer, is on the alert to prevent the slaughter of the innocents, but is not at all confident that he can successfully combat the determined efforts of the fanatics to carry out the threats which they have openly made. The little foothill town is in a frenzy of excitement, and a conflict between the authorities and the enthusiasts is expected.

(cited in Robeck 2006: 208)

The secular press was not the only source of discontent with the Pentecostal revival. Mainstream Christian denominations quickly distanced themselves from the Pentecostal "fanatics." Even leaders of the Holiness movement, the revival that became the springboard for Pentecostalism, denounced the gatherings at Azusa Street. William T. MacArthur, the superintendent of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, issued a statement in 1907 condemning the Pentecostal outbreak, saying "The door is...thrown wide open to fanaticism," and "the minds have broken down under the strain and several sent to insane asylums" (cited in Anderson 1979: 144). The attitude toward the Pentecostals was largely the same across mainstream denominations—the Pentecostals were fanatics, borderline insane, and irrational. A.B. Simpson, a leader of the Holiness movement and innovator of the "Fourfold Gospel" affirmed that the gift of tongues had returned to the church, but chastised the Pentecostal expression of it as "more closely resembling wild animals than rational beings" (cited in Anderson 1979: 144).

In November of 1906 William Seymour invited his mentor and teacher, Charles Fox Parham, to come from Kansas to Los Angeles to witness the great movement that Parham had at least partly inspired some years earlier at his Bible School in Topeka, when he and his students experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by the gift of tongues. Parham's impression of the Azusa Street revival horrified him and he

even attempted to take it over from Seymour. Seymour was forced to dismiss him, which in turn encouraged Parham to start his own congregation a few blocks from the Azusa gatherings. Parham advertised his services and made a point to distinguish his congregation from the crowded Azusa Street mission, saying:

We conduct dignified religious services, and have no connection with the sort which is characterized by trances, fits and spasms, jerks, shakes and contortions. We are wholly foreign to the religious anarchy, which marks the Los Angeles Azusa street meetings, and expect to do good in Whittier along proper and profound Christian lines. (cited in Robeck 2006: 128)

Parham had thought that Seymour had gone too far in Los Angeles, and had crossed an invisible line that separated respectable devotion for God and unbridled religious fanaticism. For most onlookers, the case was the same: Pentecostals were crossing a boundary of rationality that no manner of spirituality could afford to cross.

When it came to spiritual matters, the Pentecostal leaders pitted their beliefs against rationality. After the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, many Pentecostals viewed the destruction as evidence of God's wrath as punishment for the sins of mankind. This position was quickly criticized by the media and the public at large, but Pentecostal leaders urged their followers to remain steadfast in their perspective on the earthquake. Joseph Smale, a California revivalist preacher of Baptist origins, called local pastors together immediately following the earthquake saying:

Do not tempt God by saying that it is its geographical position or the geological formation of the land upon which it is built. It is my solemn conviction that the only thing which has saved Los Angeles is the intense and abounding prayer life of many of the Lord's intercessors in this city. (cited in Robeck 2006: 80)

The danger for the pastors and their congregations was, according to Smale, falling into a trap of rationalistic thinking and interpretation of the event, which would consequently remove the message God had sent to his believers through the natural disaster. Therefore,

Smale exhorted his supporters to reject rational thinking, which was at odds with the supernatural. Smale continues by saying:

By explaining the recent event on lines of rationalism, we are exposed to the charge of worshipping a God of love who is indifferent to his creatures, or a God who is mastered by his own laws and cannot deliver from peril those whom he loves.

We repudiate the rationalistic position. We believe God was in the earthquake and we believe in God as a God of love, and we can see in the truth that he is a God of love an argument for his presence in the earthquake. (cited in Robeck 2006: 81)

Pentecostals were distancing themselves from rationality when it came to spiritual matters, a cause that did not work to change the minds of those who labeled them “irrational,” “fanatical,” or “hysterical.”

Emotional Religion

Pentecostalism has been described by many as an “emotional religion,” because of the displays of a variety of emotions by its members precipitated by conversion, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the laying on of hands, healing services, or during worship. Though often thought of as a side effect of the Pentecostal experience, the expression of emotion is an integral part of Pentecostal spirituality. Jacobson refers to this when he writes, “the emotional power of conversion, the suddenness of its transformative effects and the unmediated character of the individual’s direct encounter with God became the bedrock of Pentecostalism” (Jacobson 2006: 7). This is not to say, however, that Pentecostalism was unique due to the emotionality associated with its expression. American revivalism, in particular, has a long tradition of engaging the emotions of its followers, and Pentecostalism was following in this tradition. Jacobson goes on to describe this tradition of emotionality, and the subtle changes starting with early Methodism, which emphasized the emotional experience of conversion, to the American Holiness movement, which took that same emotional experience and focused it on the experience of sanctification that

was meant, for the believer, to follow conversion. This shift laid the foundation for early Pentecostalism, whose adherents experienced this sanctification as a baptism in the spirit, accompanied by speaking in tongues (2006: 7).

Max Weber recognized an “emotional character” in American Methodism and perhaps even foreshadowed the coming of Pentecostalism when he described Methodism in America as having “under certain circumstances involved an emotional struggle of such intensity as to lead to the most terrible ecstasies” (Weber 1958: 140). He made a similar observation about various Pietistic movements:

Moreover, the emotion was capable of such intensity, that religion took on a positively hysterical character, resulting in the alternation which is familiar from examples without number and neuro-pathologically understandable, of half-conscious states of religious ecstasy with periods of nervous exhaustion which were felt as abandonment by God. (1958: 130)

The observations bear a striking resemblance to those made by onlookers of the Pentecostal movement. Weber saw such displays of emotion as a demonstration of hysteria, not as rational expressions of spirituality.

Weber had outlined in *The Protestant Ethic* a set of arguments that explained why Protestants were predisposed to be good capitalists, and at the top of the pecking order he had placed the Calvinists. With their doctrine of predestination, the belief that God had predetermined who was and who was not to be saved from judgment, Calvinists were bound to be diligent in their work, so as to demonstrate to themselves and to others that they were a member of God’s elect. But Methodists, the ancestors of Pentecostals, were by and large not believers in predestination, but more closely associated with Arminianism, the belief that God had not predetermined who was to be saved, but instead had bestowed upon humankind free will, giving them charge over their fate. Weber therefore had the task of explaining how Methodism shared in the Protestant Ethic for reasons other than those of the Calvinists. Weber’s understanding of Methodism was closely linked to his understanding of Puritanism, claiming, “its ethical practice was closely related to that of English Puritanism, the revival of which it aspired to be” (1958: 143). His argument was that even though Methodism largely rejected the doctrine of

predestination, the Methodists had “entered into a peculiar alliance...with the ascetic ethics which had for good and all been stamped with rationality by Puritanism” (1958: 140). The “ascetic ethics” borrowed from the Puritans, coupled with Wesley’s doctrine of sanctification, acted as an adequate substitute for the Calvinists’ doctrine of predestination, in that Methodists had found other means to guarantee their *certitudo salutis*.

Weber makes a point to state that the emotional ecstasies displayed by Methodists, hysterical though they may be, “by no means destroyed the otherwise rational character of conduct” (1958: 143). Doubtlessly this statement served more to reconcile the obvious contradiction in terms Weber was faced with; for many onlookers of such emotional religious expression declared it to be “irrational.” Weber, however, sought to establish that one’s manner of religious expression had no bearing on one’s ability to make rational decisions when it came to economic behavior. This was the case because, for Weber, rationalism had so ingratiated itself with the Protestant (and one could in this case even say, American) psyche, that no manner of religious experience, no matter how “irrational” it may be, could destroy the rational *modus operandi*.

Just as Weber had proved that rationalism had swept through ethical and moral thought in Europe and the Americas, beginning with the Renaissance, Weber demonstrated that the rise of reason had simultaneously shaped cultural and religious norms and allowed itself to be subjected to cultural and religious norms. “One no longer had to strike a balance between norms and reason: reason itself depended on norms, and specifically culturally bound norms of religious origin” (Zimmerman 2006: 69). Therefore, onlookers of Pentecostalism who declared the movement “irrational” were not necessarily claiming it to be outside the realm of rational thought, but rather outside the religious and cultural norms they had accustomed themselves to, and subsequently molded their reason around.

Weber was mildly concerned, however, about the potential effect of “emotional ecstasies” within the reformed tradition. Weber feared that such emotional intensities within the Calvinist tradition might lead to the desire to separate the elect from the world, thus creating “a sort of monastic community life of half-communistic character” (1958:

131). Such a result would in effect destroy the worldly asceticism that the Protestant ethic had so tediously constructed, all at the hand of unbridled emotion.

However, this process of isolation was not inevitable, and so long as emotional intensities did not lead followers to create monastic communes, the emotional flavor of Pietism only worked to create a “stricter ascetic control of conduct in the calling” (1958: 131). This line of thought, however, was immediately criticized by Karl Fischer in his 1907 review of *The Protestant Ethic*. Referring to radical Baptists who were known to withdraw from contact with “worldly people,” Fischer claims that “intensely ‘waiting’ for the descent of the Holy Spirit could not easily have lent itself to sober penny-counting” (Chalcraft 2001: 28).

Weber's Emotional Religion and Race

Weber's review of emotional ecstasies and hysterical manifestations of spirituality, as put forth in *The Protestant Ethic*, was limited to white, European (or of European ancestry) Protestants, and failed to include his own views on racial, biological, and cultural differences which demonstrated a different view on the relationship between “emotional religion” and labor. After Max Weber's 1904 trip to the United States, in which he toured the American South and met with black intellectuals such as W.E.B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, he took an interest in the “Negro Question,” as it was called, when he invited Dubois to speak in Germany on the same topic. By 1907, Weber sought to incorporate racial and cultural differences as a corollary to his theory of religion and labor as laid out two years earlier in *The Protestant Ethic*. Andrew Zimmerman explains, “Focusing on race allowed Weber to consider African Americans, the majority of whom were Protestant, after all, as a type of worker fundamentally different from white Protestants” (2010: 214).

Weber believed that African Americans were inferior to white American laborers, but had to navigate his way through an explanation as to why, because they both shared the Protestant religion. He therefore sought to explain this through the “existence of hereditary mental illnesses among ‘North American Negroes,’” and subsequently argue for “different ethnic potentials for hysteria” (Zimmerman 2010: 215). Weber believed that African Americans were predisposed to “hysteria,” resulting from “culture (or rather

lack of culture),” and this hysteria and lack of culture negated those aspects of Protestantism which promoted such devotion in a calling that white Protestants possessed (2010: 215). Because Weber was so adamant about cultural and civilizational differences and the implications toward attitudes to labor, it would be difficult to speculate how Weber would have characterized the Pentecostal revival. Clearly, he differentiated between “white hysteria” and “black hysteria,” the former not necessarily having an adverse affect on white Protestants’ attitude toward labor, and the latter decisively functioning as the key factor that excluded black Protestants from sharing the Protestant Ethic with their white counterparts. More importantly, this demonstrates Weber’s ambivalence toward “hysteria” in the religious context.

The Azusa Street Revival was characterized in the beginning as largely a “black” phenomenon, consisting overwhelmingly of African American congregants. As time went on, the movement grew in its diversity, but retained a certain African American character. Robeck explains:

Many of the expressions approved at Azusa Street could also be found within traditional African American centers of folk worship—especially in the rural South—though they were largely absent from the more sophisticated black congregations of Los Angeles. (Robeck 2006: 137)

The religious expressions found at Azusa Street would have therefore been quite similar, if not identical, to those witnessed by Max Weber during his 1904-1905 trip to the American South, the same expressions that Weber would later argue constituted “hysteria” for North American “negroes,” who lacked the same work ethic as white Protestants. It is not clear, however, that Weber ever intended to demonstrate hysterical religious expressions as grounds for exclusion from the Protestant Ethic. More likely, Weber was merely keeping consistency with the racial stereotypes with which he had become accustomed.

The Pentecostal Calling

Pentecostalism's initial spread from Los Angeles to every continent on Earth within a few years of the Azusa Street Revival has been labeled by virtually every scholar of the movement as nothing short of a phenomenon. This was made possible by the fact that Pentecostalism, in its beginning, was not yet an "-ism" but an experience of the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit," which did not require a conversion or a particular change of allegiance, but rather a deepening of spirituality into the realm of ecstasy, to which many Christians could already relate on some level. Many Christians remained in their respective denominations, but adopted particular Pentecostal characteristics. This was made possible by the experiential character associated with Pentecostalism, and the efforts of Pentecostal leaders to avoid doctrinal issues that served as barriers between denominations.

Nonetheless, it required intense devotion and dedication on the part of preachers and missionaries to carry the message. Pentecostals and Max Weber would doubtlessly share a word in common to describe their mission; it was for the believers, and for the sociologist, a calling (*beruf*). The term "calling" had already taken on a religious connotation in the German, *beruf*, by the time Martin Luther, as a reformer, used it (Weber, 1958: 80). The term was an innovation and exclusive to Protestantism, as Weber explains:

And if we trace the history of the word through the civilized languages, it appears that neither the predominantly Catholic peoples nor those of classical antiquity have possessed any expression of similar connotation for what we know as a calling (in the sense of a life-task, a definite field in which to work), while one has existed for all predominantly Protestant peoples. (1958: 79)

This was the lynchpin for Weber's thesis because by taking on a religious connotation the word "calling" effectively "gave every-day worldly activity a religious significance" (1958: 80). The Protestant believer, through an understanding of his or her calling, was diverted away from monastic asceticism and believed that pleasing God could be achieved only through "the fulfillment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world" (1958: 80).

However, we could hardly call the work of Pentecostal itinerant preachers and missionaries “every-day worldly activity.” Pentecostals had taken a term that had sanctified ordinary labor, and turned it back on itself—giving a new breath of life to the term, to sanctify their mission in order to facilitate the spread of the Holy Spirit throughout the globe. In the beginning, even the practice of speaking in tongues was considered by many to be a calling in and of itself. Many believed, including Charles Fox Parham, that God had bestowed foreign languages upon them miraculously (xenolalia), instead of an incomprehensible heavenly language (glossolalia), for the purpose of spreading God’s Kingdom to areas of the world God himself chose for the believer to go. This belief became so strong that the Azusa Street mission developed a four-step program to follow when confronted with a believer practicing xenolalia:

First, they attempted to identify the language. Second, if they felt they had identified it, they sought to establish whether the speaker believed he or she had a received a missionary ‘call.’ Third, if the tongues-speaker claimed to have such a call, the mission staff tried to discern whether the call was genuine and whether the person was ready and willing to go. Finally, if the person testified to a readiness to go, and the mission discerned the necessary gifts and call, then they gave the candidate the money to reach the foreign field, and he or she left town within days, if not hours. (Robeck, 2006: 239).

Others had been “called” to heal incurable diseases or to practice the gift of prophecy, exhorting God’s word to others as revealed to the prophet. Very quickly within the Pentecostal revival the “gifts” of the Spirit became closely linked with various spiritual callings, so that many believers felt “called” to be a prophet, a healer, a missionary, a preacher, or a teacher in God’s Kingdom.

This restoration of the term “calling” during the Pentecostal revival proves slightly ironical when contrasted with Max Weber’s analysis. As previously mentioned, Weber discovered that the religious connotation imposed on a “calling” was a vital innovation that sanctified labor, thus creating divine obligation to be diligent in one’s trade. Weber noticed that the significance of this divine obligation had pervaded morality and ethics themselves, to the point that it was no longer a “religious” task to be diligent in

one's work, but simply an ethical duty accepted by society at large, as demonstrated through the writings of Benjamin Franklin. It was Weber's suspicion that the capitalistic spirit was no longer dependent upon the religious justification that initiated it, but rather had developed its own morality and imposed it onto society *en masse*. Eventually, religion could fade away, but "the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs" (Weber 1958: 229). Weber thought this would crush the human spirit, acting as an "iron cage" of rationality. But around the same time that Weber would theorize such an end result, Pentecostals were experiencing a revival of spirituality in which they injected new life into the idea of God's "calling" for their life—a reinterpretation of a term that Weber hypothesized would eventually lose all religious meaning. Pentecostals were, in essence, stripping the secular meaning from the term "calling" and looking to fulfill their respective callings in order that prophecies may be fulfilled and Jesus may return and gather them before the apocalypse.

Pentecostals and the World

Pentecostal attitudes toward one's "calling" represent a general worldview shared by many early Pentecostals, one that was largely focused on the present and that which was about to happen – namely the second coming of Christ to the Earth. Hollenweger summarizes this outlook quite well:

The early rain at Pentecost was followed by the long period of drought, of the wilderness, in which only a very few 'mercy drops' fell upon mankind in its thirst. But now 'streams of grace are falling down', the 'showers of blessing', the latter rain has come. Consequently, the history of the church, apart from a few 'mercy drops', such as the Reformation, is of no importance. There is no time to bother with the past. What matters is the present. Even the history of the Pentecostal movement is little known. (1969: 413)

For those called to the mission field it was expected that this calling was expediting the fulfillment of prophecy that all the world must hear the gospel of Christ before he returned in the "second coming." As such, many early Pentecostals left for the mission field expecting the Lord to return to gather his followers before they themselves would

return to America (Robeck 2006: 240). Early Pentecostals believed they were witnesses to a monumental shift in the course of human history. The signs and wonders brought forth by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit corresponded to those recorded in the book of Acts, known as the day of Pentecost. This was almost unanimously believed to be the “Latter Rain” that was expected to “immediately precede the apocalyptic Second Coming” (Anderson 1979: 81). Interpretations of what was happening were unanimous among preachers and facilitators of the movement, and can be summarized in the words of Reverend A.G. Jeffries of the Assemblies of God, as he proclaimed in 1916:

What does all this mean? Does it not presage the end of time? Is not this whole movement a prophecy of the coming of Him ‘Whose right it is to reign’? I believe it is...The ineradicable conviction is on the saints of God that Jesus is coming soon...Even so, Come Lord Jesus. (cited in Anderson 1979: 80)

By and large, Pentecostals believed they were returning to an “Apostolic age,” similar to that of the time of the Apostle Paul, waiting and hastening (in whatever ways they could) the return of Christ. Weber’s understanding of the Pauline sense of “calling” was basically that it was absent, or at best “indifferent.” “Since everyone was simply waiting for the coming of the Lord, there was nothing to do but remain in the station and in the worldly occupation in which the call of the Lord had found him, and labour as before” (Weber 1958: 84). This is part of Weber’s argument that the concept of “calling” as a divine mandate for worldly labor was Luther’s innovation. This seems to be Weber’s only contact with a religious group that was “filled with eschatological hopes” and it was confined to “those first generations” (1958: 84). Moreover he saw these “eschatological hopes” as either a distraction from worldly enterprise or, at best, having no bearing upon one’s attitude toward work. Essentially, the mindset that was centered upon “simply waiting for the coming of the Lord” had no reason to incorporate an attitude toward labor into their moral ethic.

For early twentieth-century Pentecostals, however, the setting was quite different than that of Christians under the control of the Roman Empire in the first century CE. Other than the two millennia of Christian tradition under their belts, Pentecostals were subjected to a society steeped in capitalist mores, founded upon principles formed by the

likes of Benjamin Franklin, who Weber credits as an individual representative of a time in which the capitalist spirit has been internalized and welded to the common sense of ethical conduct. Though Weber saw early Christians as “simply waiting for the coming of the Lord,” which may be a hasty generalization on his part, it is difficult to see early Pentecostals, though certainly filled with eschatological hopes, as possessing what Weber called “the Pauline eschatological indifference” (1958: 84). If early Christians were waiting patiently for Jesus’ return, then early Pentecostals were busy spreading the word, “get ready.”

The Pentecostal Protest

According to Robert Mapes Anderson,⁵ Pentecostalism, largely due to its millenarian focus, can be seen as a “protest against the whole thrust of modern urban-industrial capitalist society” (1979: 223). Composed mostly of the poor working classes, Pentecostalism represents a subsection of society discontented with that which had placed them at the bottom of the social and economic ladders. Though veiled by protests against Higher Criticism, Darwinism, and declining morality in the Church, Pentecostals’ protests were deeply rooted in discontent with the triumphs of scientific rationalism, bureaucracy, and secularism (Anderson 1979: 224). Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* showed how Protestantism had facilitated the rise of modern capitalism, but Pentecostalism, in many ways, represented the other end of the spectrum, a portion of society that believed that the “spirit” of modern capitalism had not benefited them, and sought to protest against it within their own Protestant tradition. Coincidentally, Pentecostals were using Weber’s own words against him. Weber focused on the term “calling” as a critical point in history, in which the first inklings of a mutually beneficial relationship between religion and capitalism was formed. Industry became divinely inspired, and later, divinely mandated. As is already evident, Pentecostals were not simply reinvigorating the idea of one’s “calling,” but using the term to strip it of its ties to monopolistic and bureaucratic

⁵ Though I use Anderson’s (1979) work to introduce the perspective of Pentecostalism stemming from discontent due to economic immobility and social isolation, he was not the first to suggest this perspective. In the following chapter a detailed account of this perspective and how it develops, beginning with the work of Richard Niebuhr (1929), is presented and analyzed. However, I here draw on Anderson’s lucid account because it represents the dominant perspective on early Pentecostal development, and, in a somewhat puzzling fashion, is not linked to any of the sociologists to be presented in the next chapter.

capitalism. Pentecostalism, early on, was defined by an “ecstatic-millenarian” character which sought to remove itself from the present age and simultaneously duplicate the attitude of the early Church, also inspired by millenarianism, and prepare individuals for the new order which Christ would soon come to establish (Anderson 1979: 232). Hollenweger poses a direct link between the socioeconomic positions of certain Pentecostals and the degree of eschatological focus, and by consequence, their degree of integration with society.

The fact that the attention and concern of Pentecostal believers is directed towards the event of Christ’s second coming makes them indifferent to the political and social problems of the world. It works as a palliative which prevents them from despairing in the wretched circumstances in which they live. As social conditions improve the fervent expectation of the imminent second coming disappears. It is still taught in theory, but is no longer a matter of experience. (Hollenweger 1972: 417)

Both Hollenweger and Anderson agree that Pentecostal Millenarianism is correlated with socioeconomic position, but whereas Hollenweger sees a direct cause and effect pattern associated with an anasthetical function, Anderson describes Pentecostal spirituality and eschatology as displaced action against the capitalist system. In both cases the result is a certain degree of detachment from social and political affairs. However, the protest Anderson describes may not have been as uniform as he presents it. Grant Wacker writes in *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (2003):

Finally, it is important to remember that radical evangelicals arrayed themselves along a dual spectrum of social class and worship style. Though systematic research remains to be done, present evidence suggests that those who came from Wesleyan holiness tradition typically represented the stable working class and evinced a sharply counterestablishment style. At the same time those who came from the Oberlin perfectionist and Keswick higher life traditions typically represented the lower middle class and evinced a less confrontational style. (Wacker 2003: 4-5)

As I have already mentioned, Weber was fearful of ecstatic, emotional religion as he observed among American Methodists and some Pietistic groups, believing that it had the capability, at least among Calvinists, to lead to “the desire to separate the elect from the world,” which could, “with strong emotional intensity, lead to a sort of monastic community life” (Weber 1958: 131). Early Pentecostalism, being focused on an apocalyptic eschatology believed to be imminent, was definitely characterized “with strong emotional intensity” and in many ways did seek to separate itself from a certain “worldliness” that Pentecostals believed had infected not only society, but the established church. However, in the case of Pentecostalism we cannot rightly say Weber’s fears were coming to fruition, because (a) it did not lead to a self-imposed monastic lifestyle and (b) the emotional intensity displayed by Pentecostals could not be understood as a cause which led to their “other-worldly” character, but as more of a side-effect stemming from a protest against their role in the capitalist system. As Anderson notes, “their social powerlessness, was transformed into feelings of religious powerlessness, and its solution was sought through tapping the source of all power in the Baptism in the Holy Spirit” (1979: 222).

Initially, this hostility felt by the Pentecostals toward the world was evident. While its predecessor, the Holiness Movement, was divided on the Church’s role in society, Pentecostalism was born with a clear vision that its mission was to focus on the conversion of individuals, and that this would effect change in society, rather than seeking to influence government or social policy directly. Pentecostals were fearful of too much emphasis on social reform, as it “could undermine the ‘spirituality’ of the faithful and divert the Church from its central task” (Anderson 1979: 196). This echoes early Methodism, with its emphasis on “saving souls,” and even as far back as the Puritan movement, as it “anticipated the later preoccupations of many evangelicals...as it pushed toward a more personal and more internal practice of the Christian faith...” (Noll 2003: 54). Perhaps a closer connection is found in Pentecostals’ suspicion of anything deemed to be “worldly” and therefore they distanced themselves from projects of social reform, seeking to focus on the Christian experience through Baptism of the Holy Spirit. By focusing on the individual’s experience, Pentecostals could maintain their distance from

various establishments of society, thus avoiding a direct confrontation with those entities believed to be responsible for their poor socioeconomic position.

This rationale was fueled by their millenarian impulses, that this world was transitory, doomed to face the wrath of God through tribulation. For Pentecostals, this world was lost already, without hope of redemption, but the Christian had the hope that Jesus would return and this second coming would rescue them from the imminent destruction of this world. Believers were looking for signs and wonders that pointed toward the apocalypse. The earthquake that struck San Francisco on the morning of April 18, 1906 was one such sign. Frank Bartleman, a Pentecostal preacher, wrote a tract just a few days after the disaster, entitled “The Earthquake,” with the question “But what has God to do with earthquakes?” in the opening lines. The rest of the tract gives a selection of Bible verses that demonstrate God’s use of natural disasters as instruments of judgment, saying “God must needs [*sic*] make a fearful example at times. And who dares say that such is not deserved? God dare not wink at sin” (cited in Robeck 2006: 79).

This millenarian emphasis, while it did not lead Pentecostals to withdraw completely from worldly affairs, did lead to a fatalistic attitude toward society and the world as a whole. The *Latter Rain Evangel* published an article addressing the sinful state of society and asked, “What is the remedy for It? What can we do to arrest the downward current? Nothing! It is too late to patch up this old world” (cited in Anderson 1979: 198). Testaments such as these were used to inspire Christians to stay focused on their mission to save souls and not get caught up in social welfare activities or government reform.

However, as Anderson notes, “their hostile and aggressive impulses were almost entirely displaced from a world of politics and work to the world of religion” (1979: 222). Very quickly, factions formed within the Azusa Street mission and even the racial harmony the movement enjoyed soon fell to the forces of segregation. If Pentecostalism was a protest against monopolistic, bureaucratic capitalism, it certainly did not manifest as such. Anderson elaborates:

The Social consequence of the movement was diametrically opposite to its unconscious intent. Pentecostalism was an instrument forged by a segment of the working class out of protest against a social system that victimized them, but it

functioned in a way that perpetuated that very system. A potential challenge to the social system was transformed into a bulwark of it. (1979: 222)

Curiously, *The Protestant Ethic* does not feature in Anderson's analysis of early Pentecostalism. Anderson's argument that Pentecostalism came from displaced frustrations with the social system invites a comparison with Weber's conclusion in *The Protestant Ethic*.

The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. (Weber 1958: 181)

Weber here is building up to introduce his famous metaphor of the "iron cage," as translated by Talcott Parsons, of modernity that no longer requires the support of religion to keep "this mechanism" in place. It is interesting that it was less than a year after these lines were first published that the Pentecostal revival took off, a movement born out of the displaced frustrations with modernity.

Tracing the lineage from "the Puritan [who] wanted to work in a calling" to the frustrated working class American trapped in Weber's iron cage of modernity illuminates Anderson's portrayal of Pentecostalism as manifested frustration toward society. Anderson fails to conclude exactly why these protests were displaced, but Weber might well have answered this for him. A natural progression of Weber's thinking would predict that such a protest against modernity was bound to be displaced, because the capitalist system had become an integral part of the working American's psyche. However, Weber never predicted such a protest would take religious expression, and it seems ironic that Pentecostals were making their protest within the Protestant framework. As Weber was declaring "But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs [religion's] support no longer" (1958: 181-182), a new movement was

gathering steam, taking those left marginalized by “victorious capitalism” and looking to relieve the pains initiated by the “Puritan who wanted to work in a calling,” and with a stroke of irony, finding their outlet in new expressions of an old tradition, the foundations of which that Puritan had also laid.

While Anderson’s portrayal of Pentecostalism’s “ecstatic millenarianism” stemming from discontent at society’s lower realm is convincing, the nuances and transitions of the century preceding the birth of Pentecostalism created a specific scenario ripe for the revivals of protest against modernity, and the nature of the protests reveals strong links to the historical processes of American Protestantism. Anderson takes a more general approach to understanding the nature of the protests against modernity that manifested in the religious revivals at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Pentecostal response consisted of a mixture of millenarianism and ecstasy. Either of these elements may arise at various levels of a social order undergoing some general crisis. In the upper reaches of the class structure they are likely to be attenuated and independent of one another. At lower levels they are intensified and more often combined. (Anderson 1979: 229)

This general understanding of the nature and application of apocalyptic and emotional tendencies in response to social crises not only seems intuitive, but is also supported with many examples. However, the anti-modernist revivals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have a nuanced history that actually points away from a simplistic application of accepted phenomena.

George Marsden (1980) captures this nuanced history leading up to anti-modernist revivals in his book, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. Though principally about the rise of Fundamentalism, Marsden’s contribution relates the ebb and flow of American Protestantism in a fluctuating, but unbreakable, relationship with American culture. Anderson’s insight into the capitalist oppression experienced by would-be Pentecostals is indispensable, though incomplete when nearing explanations of how these experiences culminated in Pentecostal experiences. Marsden’s historical reading emphasizes cultural aspects of this religious history that set a clear precedent for the “ecstatic millenarianism” that Anderson takes for granted.

A complete account of the cultural transitions that paved the way for the flurry of anti-modernist revivals of the early twentieth century, to which Pentecostalism belongs, is not necessary, for it is not my intention to offer another view of how and why Pentecostalism arose. However, a brief understanding of these cultural transitions will provide insight into the nature of the relationship between Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, a peculiar relationship which is often confusing but certainly important to the development of post-Azusa Pentecostalism.

Conclusion

Although Weber never attempted to address the Pentecostal phenomenon which was conceived and gained considerable momentum in his time, his work seems to have much to say to Pentecostalism. Weber was not particularly concerned with religion's role in revitalizing an economy per se, but rather he was concerned with religion's role in furthering capitalist ideals to the point of facilitating a special relationship between capitalist/rationalist mores with religious ones, and forecasting the replacement of the latter by the former. In this process Weber demonstrated how Protestantism created a personality earmarked by a psychological disposition toward leading an inner-worldly ascetic life—a rational approach to the world in order to achieve an irrational goal of *certitudo salutis*: assurance of salvation. A certain morality developed that was well suited to capitalism. However, for those who inherited this same morality and worldview, but failed to attain the same material successes that worked to validate the moral code and provide the assurance of God's grace and favor, Pentecostalism offered a solution. Pentecostals were those that found that, in their own era, an inner-worldly asceticism did not produce the same results for all, that the capitalist system was discriminatory. Pentecostals found their *certitudo salutis* in an experience, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the sign of which was unmistakable: speaking in tongues. By speaking in tongues and thus proving to oneself and others that the Holy Spirit was dwelling inside them, Pentecostals were attaining a certain assurance of God's favor, their own *certitudo salutis*, that they had failed to achieve or lacked the means to achieve in the same way their predecessors had done.

Weberian sociology took some time to develop, and during this time Pentecostalism would experience significant growth and undertake various trajectories. Max Weber had not achieved, during his lifetime, the recognition that would accompany *The Protestant Ethic*. If anyone was equipped to address the changes in society and economy that were taking place in post-war America, it was Max Weber. His work on East Elbian rural agriculture (though steeped as it was in racist political ideology) had significant foresight into the eventualities inflicted by capitalist agriculture and mass migration to city life, and Max Weber was acutely aware of the place of religion in these changes. Weber's *The Protestant Ethic*, in conjunction with his experience among Prussian agriculturalists, would have volumes to speak directly to the phenomenon of Pentecostalism in the early decades of the twentieth century. As we will see in the next chapter, *The Protestant Ethic* did have significant impact on the future of sociological studies involving Pentecostalism, though the immediate effect would come in the form of church-sect theory and a Parsonian importation of Weber's voluntaristic framework.

Chapter 3

The Development of American Sociology and the Study of Pentecostalism

Introduction

Developments in sociology, specifically Talcott Parsons' positivist theory of social action and the rise of church-sect theory, were very influential in early studies of Pentecostalism. Conversely, Pentecostalism frequently played an important role in the fieldwork of sociologists such as Walter Goldschmidt, Liston Pope, and Milton Yinger, among others, who sought to utilize and expand these theories with hard data. These earlier works represent the shift described by Sean McCloud (2007) from biological and scientific explanations of what attracts people to which religion, to an examination of social and economic factors driving people to this or that faith. Pentecostalism was uniquely situated as a sect (or at least viewed as a sect) experiencing significant growth, growth that was correlated to economic decline. Parsons' theory of voluntaristic action, heavily based on the work of Max Weber, had immediate implications for social aspects of economic activity, and Pentecostalism's link with urban migration, economic hardships, and social dislocation appeared to offer a relevant avenue to explore these implications. In addition, Parsons solidified the position of functional analysis, which served as the sociologist's tool kit in the field.

However, sociologists did not study the Pentecostal movement, as such. Instead, they researched various "sects," some of which were associated with a Pentecostal network, and others that were set up independently, but exhibited characteristics commonly associated with Pentecostalism. There is some legitimacy in this, however, because Pentecostalism, in the early decades of the twentieth century, was in actuality an "amorphous movement" composed of "a confusing patchwork of small sects frequently divided by seemingly trivial points," says David Harrell (1975: 11). The lens of history has pushed the common traits and characteristics between the various Pentecostal networks to the forefront, giving a perspective to the phenomenon that would not really

be achieved until Walter J. Hollenweger collected the histories together in his seminal work, *The Pentecostals*, in 1969.

Ironically though, as sociologists navigated their way through the confusing networks that would later be called “Pentecostalism,” there were, at the same time, significant developments within the movement itself that would significantly alter the trajectories of Pentecostal groups. While the term “sect” was being refined and applied to various Pentecostal groups, other Pentecostals were defying the sectarian construct altogether by achieving increased respectability, wealth, and social status. While this was not true for all Pentecostals, there were significant movements grounded with Pentecostal roots, yet reaching out to new classes of peoples with different backgrounds than those used to supply explanations about the growth and function of Pentecostalism.

In this chapter I will begin by introducing the new developments in the sociology of religion and illustrate the resulting framework under which Pentecostalism received analysis. The work and influence of Max Weber are represented (or at times, misrepresented) in these developments, and through this extension provides us with the first encounter between Weberian sociology and Pentecostalism. As will become evident, this encounter is not as straightforward as the one presented by the Centre for Development and Enterprise’s comparison between *The Protestant Ethic* and Pentecostalism (see CDE 2008).

From here I move to the evolution of the Pentecostal movement itself, highlighting significant figures and movements that have concomitantly helped shape the various movements into a recognizable religious crusade and increased the diversity of membership, practices, beliefs, and emphases to a point that defies the affinities presumed by sociologists for taxonomic approaches to the study of religion.

Talcott Parsons and Max Weber

Much of the credit, though not without a great deal of criticism, for introducing Americans to the work of Max Weber is given to Talcott Parsons, the first translator of *The Protestant Ethic* into English. For decades scholars have scrutinized Parsons for “inventing” Max Weber through biased translations, misinterpretations of Weber’s intentions, and the like (Swatos and Kivisto 2007: 101). However, it was perhaps through

Parsons' (1937) "Voluntaristic Theory of Action" that Americans became enamored with the German scholar's work.⁶ This was the case because Parsons, before any other writer in English, understood the vast implications at the heart of *The Protestant Ethic*. Whereas others had seen *The Protestant Ethic* merely as uncovering the historical roots of modern capitalism, demonstrating an affinity between religion and economics, or as a justification for the dominance of northern Europe over its southern counterpart, Parsons saw these things and much more in Weber's seminal work. He understood that at the heart of the work was a model for understanding, and accounting for, human action. Parsons understood that what Weber had given to the world was a scientific approach to studying collective human behavior vis-à-vis religion. Weber lucidly presented a guide to understanding the interests behind human behavior, both ideal and material. As Swidler elaborates, "Interests are the engine of action, pushing it along, but ideas define the destinations human beings seek to reach (inner-worldly versus other-worldly possibilities of salvation, for example) and the means for getting there (mystical versus ascetic techniques of salvation)" (Swidler 1986: 274).

Thus Weber's work was a historical treatise into the power of ideas, how they shape interests, and how this governs action. The framework was grounded in a rationalistic approach, in that the principle elements used to understand rational actions were "ends," "means," and "conditions" (Parsons 1937: 698-699). In the case of Weber's Calvinists, the ends pursued by the actors were other-worldly, situated in a symbolic reality, but as Weber demonstrates, these ends can be just as (and often more) powerful in shaping interests and, by extension, action. This was the lynchpin for Weber, as he rejected Marxian historical materialism, essentially a utilitarian position placed in historical context (Parsons 1937: 715). Symbolic or other-worldly objectives accounted for behaviors that had no apparent benefits for those involved. Parsons illustrates that

⁶ Parsons' voluntaristic theory was situated in his lengthy work, *The Structure of Social Action* (1937), in which he presents the work of four sociologists: Alfred Marshall (1842-1924), Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), and Max Weber (1864-1920). Parsons' intention is to distill a common theme in the significant works of each of these sociologists with regard to social action, culminating in a "voluntaristic theory of social action." Though each of these sociologists provides a unique perspective and contribution to developing this theory, Parsons clearly favors the work of Weber as superior to the others' work, noting that "*all* of them" were found in Weber's work, which he did completely independent of the others (1937: 668). Thus, Parsons' theory is more firmly grounded in Weber's work than the others, because Weber most clearly and convincingly displayed a voluntaristic theory of action in his empirical work.

“Weber has brought a great deal of evidence to show that while believing is not, *ipso facto*, doing, what one believes has much to do with what he does” (1937: 538). Furthermore, Weber demonstrated how far the effects could be seen of these interests, shaped by religious ideas, that is, the development of modern capitalism.

Parsons saw the importance of Weber’s model of ideas → interests → actions. Parsons believed that Weber’s intention behind this model was not to build a generalized theoretical system in the social field. He says there is “little evidence that he (Weber) had any clear conception either of the possibility of doing so or of its usefulness if it could be done” (Parsons 1937: 686). Weber’s intention was rather to solve the specific empirical problems, as it were, that he came across. In so doing, he developed theory *ad hoc* to serve the specific purposes of the problem under analysis (Parsons 1937: 686). Talcott Parsons understood this about Weber’s work, but was compelled by the sheer genius of the theory involved to incorporate it in his “voluntaristic theory of social action”. Parsons elaborates:

But his empirical research was not carried on with any dry-as-dust pedantry, investigating obscure and esoteric problems. He attacked the most significant questions he could find, with a range of perspective and an imaginative scope that few have equaled. It is indeed significant that in doing this he was in fact led, though without full self-consciousness, to develop the outline of a generalized theoretical system in at least one of its main aspects. (Parsons 1937: 686)

The “main aspect” referred to here is a “generalized system of action” (1937: 686). It was precisely this aspect that Parsons incorporated into his voluntaristic theory, or rather, served as the model on which his voluntaristic theory was based. Because Weber had no intention of creating such a model for sociological inquiry, Parsons drew on the works of Émile Durkheim, Vilfredo Pareto, and Alfred Marshall to illustrate the dominance of a voluntaristic theory in the work of all of these sociologists, suggesting that this is the common (and novel) thread running through their seemingly different works. This thread demonstrated the possibility of connecting individual interests and actions to their macrosocial realizations, joining positive social theory and normative social action (Coleman 1986: 1310). This formed the basis of Structural Functionalism, a school of

thought that understood society as a web of interrelated structures, all with different, but important, functions that compose a society. Parsons saw his work as adding to those he cites in *The Structure of Social Action*, rather than developing new theory. For Parsons, the social sciences were constantly progressing toward more enlightened, more efficient modes of analysis. His contributions were therefore the next step in the journey of progress.

Sociologists and Pentecostalism

In sociologists' approaches to the phenomena of Pentecostal groups, two themes can be quickly identified as universally relevant, at least until the early 1960s. Firstly, Talcott Parsons' functionalist approach is the primary methodological framework for all sociological studies of Pentecostalism during this period. Gradually we see the variables taken under consideration by sociologists increase in number and complexity. As the situation becomes increasingly convoluted, it becomes clear that the functionalist model itself may be untenable when there are so many variables at play.⁷ Until then, however, sociologists are content with the Parsonian approach to the study of religion, making addendums and clarifications when necessary.

The second theme that guides the sociology of Pentecostalism during this period is the evolution of church-sect theory. It is difficult to say when church-sect theory actually came into being as a model for the relationship between religion and society. Max Weber first introduced the terms as tools to aid him in his analysis of historical data. The "church" and the "sect" were not classifications but rather idealized types of religious bodies from which he could launch a comparison (Swatos 1976: 133). As we will see, sociologists became increasingly distant from Max Weber's heuristic use of the terms in his "ideal type" construct and adopted a more taxonomic use for the terms. Whereas Weber employed the church and the sect as models for comparison, ideals that represent the polar extremes of a religious body's relationship to their society/environment, they increasingly became used as classifications (with additional and sub-classifications added over time). We therefore see the issue of complexity in

⁷ This is especially clear in Milton Yinger's 1957 work, *Religion, Society and the Individual*, in which he can produce examples and counter-examples for the numerous theories regarding sectarian religious communities.

functional analysis, drawing attention to the diversion away from Weber's original use for the terms.

H. Richard Niebuhr

In 1929, a book was published by a seminary professor who felt compelled to write about problems he came across while trying to teach a course in "Symbolics." In the course the professor was meant to teach students about the various Christian denominations, distinguishing them by their respective doctrines and then approaching the ethical issue of church unity from a theological point of view. The professor found the exercise "so artificial and fruitless that he found himself compelled to turn from theology to history, sociology, and ethics for a more satisfactory account of denomination differences and a more significant approach to the question of union" (Niebuhr 1929: vii). The professor was H. Richard Niebuhr, younger brother of theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, and it was his first systematic study of American Christianity. Though he would not call himself a sociologist or a church historian, he was well acquainted with the works of Troeltsch, Weber, Tawney, and Marx, having read the works of Troeltsch and Weber in the original German. The book would later become an immensely significant text in the sociology of religion and propel the theories of Weber and Troeltsch to the forefront of sociological inquiry, through their typologies of religious organization, namely, church-sect theory.

H. Richard Niebuhr was first and foremost a theologian, discontent with the state of Christianity, seeking to use sociological, historical, and ethical tools to illustrate the divisive aspect of American pluralism of denominations. Niebuhr draws on the sociological tools formed by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch which came to be known as church-sect theory. Weber and Troeltsch did not share the same understanding about the church and the sect, which has been pointed out by Swatos (1976), and Niebuhr naturally draws his interpretation along closer lines with the fellow theologian, Troeltsch. The appearance of the book in 1929, one year before Parsons' translation of *The Protestant Ethic* appeared, meant that many scholars were introduced to Max Weber through Niebuhr's portrait of him: a concise summary of Weber's theory contextualized in a Troeltschian framework. In many ways Niebuhr's *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* mirrors the groundbreaking text of Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social*

Teachings of the Christian Church (Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen, 1912). Like Troeltsch, Niebuhr was a theologian concerned with the state and trajectory of the Christian church and the conflictual relationship between church and the social order. Whereas Troeltsch describes three “types” of Christianity (church-type, sect-type, and mystical-type), Niebuhr analyzes the history of denominations to demonstrate the inequalities that had come to define the boundaries between various denominations. Nonetheless, Niebuhr’s book inspired a robust debate that would carry on for decades about church-sect theory.

Niebuhr writes both as a sociologist and a concerned theologian, which can create an ambiguous atmosphere in which to distinguish between analysis and prescription. Diefenthaler says, “[Niebuhr’s] historical and sociological appraisals do not mask his personal frustration over the divided character of Christendom” (Diefenthaler 1986: 172). Though Niebuhr had an agenda to create a more ecumenical Christian body in America, he makes stunning observations about the racial and economic lines that divide denominations, claiming: “for the divisions of the church have been occasioned more frequently by the direct and indirect operation of economic factors than the influence of any other major interest of man” (Niebuhr 1929: 26). He is careful to discourage a strictly economic interpretation of denominationalism (just as Anderson would discourage the same economic interpretation for the formation of Pentecostalism in 1979). Niebuhr, being a theologian, declares it “unjustifiable, above all, to leave the religious factor itself out of account in dealing with religious movements” (Niebuhr 1929: 27). Because of this religious aspect in Niebuhr’s work, it is difficult to call *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* a strictly sociological text. Nonetheless, Niebuhr’s principle concern is rooted in sociological phenomena and he makes use of the fathers of sociology of religion to make his case.

Niebuhr devotes two chapters to “The Churches of the Disinherited.” There is no mention of Pentecostalism as a distinct movement with its own character, though Niebuhr likely has in mind congregations that would retrospectively be numbered among the Pentecostal movement. It appears that, despite the establishment of unified Pentecostal denominations across the nation, Niebuhr was not aware of Pentecostalism as a cohesive movement worth mentioning by name. Still, Niebuhr’s “churches of the disinherited”

include a pattern of classification that would not exclude the Pentecostals, as he lists “Anabaptists, Quakers, Methodists, Salvation Army, and more recent sects of like type,” referring to “revolutions of the poor” (Niebuhr 1929: 28). However, he considers, “the Methodist revival was the last great religious revolution of the disinherited in Christendom,” though it is difficult to discern what qualifies a religious movement to be deemed a “revolution” for Niebuhr (1929: 72). He likely refers to Pentecostalism when he speaks of “the naïve religious movements” and “contemporary movements of the religious poor toward the attainment of adequate religious experience and expression come to the light in many a gospel tabernacle and evangelistic society and millenarian association” (1929:75-76). From Niebuhr’s point of view in 1929, “there is no effective religious movement among the disinherited today,” and which movements among the poor that did exist, such as those of a Pentecostal nature, were “simply outside the pale of organized Christianity” (1929: 76).

Niebuhr understands Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic* as arguing that the character of early Reformation churches was formed in large part through an “alliance with rising commercialism and set forth an interpretation of Christianity conformable with their major economic interests” (Niebuhr 1929: 28). Niebuhr’s knowledge of *The Protestant Ethic* came from reading Weber’s later work, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Collected Essays in the Sociology of Religion, 1922), which contained an edited version of *Die Protestantische Ethik und der “Geist” des Kapitalismus*, along with Weber’s essays on Chinese, Indian, and Jewish religions. Apropos of Weber’s work, Niebuhr proclaims, “it is not possible to disagree with the fundamental contention that a close relation has existed in modern times between these two great social movements [capitalism and Calvinism]” (1929: 79-80). He also draws comparisons between the emotionality of religious groups and their economic (and educational) limitations. He writes:

The religion of the untutored and economically disfranchised classes has distinct ethical and psychological characteristics, corresponding to the needs of these groups. Emotional fervor is one common mark. Where the power of abstract thought has not been highly developed and where inhibitions on emotional expression have not been set up by a system of polite conventions, religion must

and will express itself in emotional terms. Under these circumstances spontaneity and energy of religious feeling rather than conformity to an abstract creed are regarded as the tests of religious genuineness...An intellectually trained and liturgically minded clergy is rejected in favor of lay leaders who serve the emotional needs of this religion more adequately and who, on the other hand, are not allied by culture and interest with those ruling classes whose superior manner of life is too obviously purchased at the expense of the poor...Intellectual naïveté and practical need combine to create a marked propensity toward millenarianism, with its promise of tangible goods and of the reversal of all present social systems of rank. (Niebuhr 1929: 30)

The text above bears remarkable similarity to Robert Anderson's (1979) appraisal of Pentecostalism, though Anderson would not go so far as to draw the link between emotional religion and lack of education and/or "intellectual naïveté."⁸ While Niebuhr does not name "Pentecostalism" as such, his description expels the possibility that Niebuhr was unacquainted with the characteristics of Pentecostalism and of its followers. Niebuhr sees these Pentecostal characteristics (emotional fervor, millenarianism, disregard for ritual) as the natural and expected religious expressions of the disinherited, because in this manner the psychological and emotional needs exclusive to the poor and uneducated are fulfilled. Nonetheless, for Niebuhr, these expressions are not necessarily desirable and are consequences of the failures of the established church to meet the needs of the poor and ethnic minorities. Niebuhr makes a historical case for connecting economic hardship to religious revolution and sectarianism, drawing on the examples of the Quakers, Mennonites, Anabaptists, and Methodists. The Methodists emerged as an underprivileged class marked for their emotionalism. Niebuhr argues that the upper classes have always and will always abhor gratuitous emotionalism in religion, yet it remains a marked trait of churches of the lower strata (Niebuhr 1929: 62). As the Methodists achieved middle-class respectability in the United States, the emotional fervor waned. Thus the need arose for another religious revolution inside Methodism, closely resembling that which spawned the movement in the days of John and Charles Wesley, to

⁸ Though certainly pertinent for Robert Anderson's 1979 book, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*, Anderson makes no mention of Niebuhr's study of religious movements of "the disinherited."

cater to the needs of the poor that were left behind as the Methodists became economically and socially upwardly mobile. Here we see the emergence of the Holiness and, later, the Pentecostal movements.

Niebuhr, despite his concerns with religion that was uneducated, admires the passion found in these “religion[s] of the heart,” and describes it as “pure religion” that inevitably erodes when believers grow in wealth. He also believes that it was the natural consequence of revivalist religion to encourage frugality and diligence, traits that he no doubt read in Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic*. He accepts and even embraces the “Protestant ethic,” saying, “we ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is in effect to grow rich” (Niebuhr 1929: 70). Though an important distinction here is that where Weber recognized this as the “Protestant ethic,” Niebuhr says, “religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches” (1929: 70). Niebuhr concludes, “therefore I do not see how it is possible in the nature of things for any revival of religion to continue long” (1929: 70). Here we see Niebuhr taking the Weberian ideals of what it means to be a sect (in this case, “revival”) and applying this ideal type, along with Weber’s “Protestant ethic” hypothesis, to forecast the fate of revivalism (in which we could include Pentecostalism).

Niebuhr’s book introduced many readers to the works of Weber, even before Talcott Parsons did so through his “Voluntaristic Theory of Action” (1937), and Niebuhr’s use of Weber’s ideal types vis-à-vis church-sect theory initiated a framework, which would undergo many alterations, in which to conduct sociological inquiry in the religious sphere. Niebuhr’s use of Weber has been contested, but it should be noted that Niebuhr was not merely making use of Weber’s ideal types; he was also operating within a framework which understood *The Protestant Ethic* itself as an ideal type.⁹ About Niebuhr’s use of Weber’s ideal type, Swatos writes:

The result has been a flood of types based on a variety of criteria which leave the impression that the task of church-sect theory is no longer one of being a tool to

⁹ It is likely that Niebuhr’s understanding of Weber’s ideal type, as in an artificial and ideal construct that does not exist in pure form but serves only as a means of comparison, was taken directly from Troeltsch (1912), who originally employed this technique in *The Social Teachings of the Christian Church*.

facilitate comparative analysis as much as to formulate a classificatory system for the application of sociological jargon to religious organization—the very opposite of what we have seen Weber's intention to have been. (Swatos 1976: 136)

Swatos demonstrates how Weber's ideal types, which were originally intended to describe organizational structure, became convoluted with Ernst Troeltsch's sociological categories of religious behavior (1976: 133). Swatos goes on to show that Niebuhr's contribution was to use Troeltsch's categories of church and sect as illustrative poles on a continuum and to present the “dynamic process[es] of religious history as groups moved along this continuum” (1976: 134). Importantly, it should be noted that as Niebuhr demonstrates these dynamic processes of transition from church to sect, and vice-versa, he is using Weber's *The Protestant Ethic* as a paradigm unrestricted by Weber's original context. We see here the first instance in which Weber's *The Protestant Ethic* is taken for granted as a universally applicable rule. However, this misuse of *The Protestant Ethic* should not be blamed on Niebuhr alone, for he was inspired by Troeltsch, who had himself taken Weber's ideal-type tools that were intended to solve a sociological (organizational) problem and transformed them into a “*sociological formulation*” (Swatos 1976: 133, author's emphasis). By whatever means, Weber posthumously began the long, and ongoing, process of being misunderstood.

A.T. Boisen

Though not a sociologist, A.T. Boisen's research of Pentecostals in 1939 includes many social aspects to which future sociologists studying the Pentecostal phenomenon would refer. Being a psychiatrist by trade, Boisen naturally explores psychological aspects of the movement. This would also feature in many sociological studies of the movement, as sociologists generally believed that while there were social and economic catalysts for the phenomenon, the function of various types of Pentecostal expression was primarily psychological. A.T. Boisen bridged a gap in sociologists' work by providing psychological assessments of Pentecostal practices, set in a social framework. Boisen

published two articles in 1939 about Pentecostals, or “Holy Rollers,” as he calls them.¹⁰

Boisen’s article, “Religion and Hard Times: A Study of the Holy Rollers,” appeared in the March 1939 edition of *Social Action* and addresses the rapid growth of “eccentric forms of religion” since the commencement of the depression era (1939: 8). Through research carried out in three localities, the most immediate correlation drawn is that of the rise in population related to urban migration to find employment and the sudden surge in number of Pentecostal congregations. The article is written in an informative tone, as if to introduce the reader to a phenomenon they will surely encounter (or perhaps already have). He describes their membership as youthful, underprivileged, and from rural areas (1939: 16). Boisen understands Pentecostalism as a form of radical mysticism that appeals to those who have disproportionately experienced the hardships of the depression. Speaking in tongues, being filled with the Spirit, and hearing the voice of God, are seen as dangerous in Boisen’s eyes, likening it to symptoms experienced by mentally ill patients he had treated, though Boisen does not see the movement as a whole as particularly dangerous. This is due to Pentecostals’ tendency to detach from worldly affairs (thus lending support for Boisen’s assessment that Pentecostalism is a mystic sect). In fact, he sees the movement as having value for individual members. This value is realized in the hope and courage it gives to those faced with difficulties, though this value is cloaked in a sincere perspective that views the Pentecostal as delusional and psychotic (1939: 29). He also sees harmful effects for children, such as cramping their natural development. He likens the “stability” found in the Pentecostal community to the “delusional system of a mental patient” (1939: 29).

Though these assessments may come across as derogatory and offensive to the modern reader, Boisen’s analysis is quite favorable and without the disgust that was often found in studies of the Pentecostals. For example, compare Boisen’s article with William Clark’s “Sanctification in Negro Religion,” published just two years earlier in *Social Forces*. Clark, situating “sanctification” (or Baptism in the Holy Spirit) in the context of Black religion in the southern U.S., concludes that the religious practice “tends to impede social progress toward higher cultural levels” (1937: 551). Clark sees Pentecostal forms

¹⁰ See: Boisen, A.T. 1939. “Religion and Hard Times. A Study of the Holy Rollers.” In *Social Action*, March 15, 1939, pp. 8-35; and Boisen, A.T. 1939. “Economic Distress and Religious Experience: a Study of the Holy Rollers.” In *Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*. Vol 2. pp. 185-194.

of religion as the product of those that could not keep up with the progress of culture and refinement. Pentecostals are the ones “left out” because of their “inability to adjust to cultural change” (1937: 550). He believes Pentecostalism appeals only to the “neurotics, and mentally retarded” and thus functions as an institution that helps those that would otherwise be housed in a mental hospital, to function on a basic social level (1937: 549, 551). Boisen’s experience as a psychiatrist allows him to speak about the “mentally ill” with a sensitivity that Clark is unable to achieve.

Goldschmidt

Walter R. Goldschmidt, writing in 1944, was inspired by Richard Niebuhr’s insight into the class barriers that coincide with church membership of various denominations. He conducted a sociological study of rural churches in California, with the aim of determining the veracity of claims that church denominations are segregated along class lines, and understanding the nature of this phenomenon. His paper takes Niebuhr’s insight out of the theological context and poses it as a sociological problem, arguing that “Class denominationalism, as a church problem, must be viewed as a general problem of class discrimination” (Goldschmidt 1944: 348).

Decisive in his results is the presence of class denominationalism: traditional and orthodox Protestant denominations (Baptist, Methodist, etc.) service by and large the wealthiest individuals of the community, while Pentecostal churches service an overwhelming majority of the skilled and unskilled laborers of the community, the lowest economic and social groups. The segregation can be explained in economic terms, though there is a significant social aspect to the divisions. The mainstream Protestant denominations make up the “nuclear community,” while Pentecostals are relegated to the “outsider” sphere, the former being directly involved in the institutions of the community, while the latter remain largely uninvolved in community affairs and work primarily on farms and estates in the outlying areas of the city (1944: 348-349). Interestingly, Goldschmidt discovers that the hierarchy is not just a binary represented by insiders/outsiders, wealthy/poor, traditional Protestant/Pentecostal; the hierarchy is detailed and distinctions can be made within each group. For example, while the Assemblies of God churches are a Pentecostal denomination and belong to the “outsider”

group of churches, their members are more affluent than other, independent, Pentecostal congregations. In fact, there is an inverse correlation between the level of “emotionalism” displayed in a church and the economic and social class to which its constituents belong. Goldschmidt claims that while the causes of the sectarian divisions are clearly economic, there are also social and psychological aspects to consider. Socially, people are drawn to socialize with people of similar status, so as to reinforce their position in the society. They neither want to socialize with people above them, for feeling that they are “being looked down upon,” and they do not want to socialize with people that are “beneath them” (1944: 354). This explains why the churches each tend to have a rather homogenous constituency.

When it comes to explaining the “emotional” or “sensual” element and the inverse correlation with social and economic status, Goldschmidt reverts to psychological explanations as to why this style of religion is increasingly popular with the disinherited. Goldschmidt approves of the dominant theories of the day, claiming that ecstatic religion serves as “entertainment, as sensual thrill, as a release for people whose life is humdrum at best, oppressive as a rule” (1944: 354). However, Goldschmidt believes that such an explanation is superficial and “does not go far enough” (1944: 354). He then presents his own theory of how the Pentecostal faith attracts the poor and disinherited, and serves a valuable role in their lives.

The appeal of the emotional religion and the asceticism for the disfranchised is this: It denies the existence of this world with its woes; it denies the values in terms of which they are the underprivileged and sets up in their stead a putative society in the Kingdom of God, where, because of their special endowments (which we call emotionalism), they are the élite. (1944: 354)

He also draws attention to Pentecostal Millenarianism as demonstrating their rejection of the world, and their “emotional participation” is a public demonstration of their acceptance in the supernatural world (1944: 355).

Goldschmidt’s findings are important because they make a link between “formalization” of religious ritual and upward economic mobility. This is most clearly seen in the example of the Assemblies of God. An Assemblies of God church in

Goldschmidt's data begins humbly, meeting in homes, with farmers serving as ministers. Over time their gatherings become services, gaining more followers and subsequently operating with a larger budget. At some point they can afford to build a building, and hire a full-time pastor with seminary training from the parent organization. The pastor, being an educated member of a religious governing body, strives to instill stability in the church, and adopts a "sane, intelligent presentation of the Gospel" in favor of the "inhibition of the spirit" (1944: 353). Those who have improved their economic and social position are, according to Goldschmidt, less tempted by the ecstatic release of emotions and are at peace with the gradual changes, while those whose position has not been bettered are dissatisfied and eventually break away from the church and form a sect more similar to the original structure in which "the spirit has the right of way" (1944: 353). This is a real account recorded in Goldschmidt's data, though he presents it in general terms, as he sees this as the expected course of events, a pattern even. He calls the process which the Assemblies of God church underwent, "formalization," though if we were to use Weberian typology, it could easily be called the "routinization of charisma." However, Weber attributes the routinization of charisma as an inevitability intrinsic to charisma itself; Goldschmidt finds the formalization process a direct result of education, increased wealth, and (implicit) increased social mobility.

Walter Goldschmidt's study of Pentecostal groups appears as a significant step forward in the history of sociological study of Pentecostalism, a step away from the racist and derogatory tone of earlier writers and toward a more objective approach to understanding the religious phenomenon. The shades of the past are still present in the ease in which he describes Pentecostal worship as "sensual," an adjective that was used to describe Black religion, with the intent to illuminate the hyper-sexuality of African Americans and thus their lack of morality. Still, Goldschmidt's study stands as the first sociological study to critically engage the role of Pentecostal religion on a micro-social level.

Goldschmidt, though he does not refer directly to Weber's work, elaborates the process through which churches become formalized and lead to sectarian breakaways, which over time become churches themselves. This study would prove significant in future studies of both Pentecostalism and church-sect theory, as it would become cited in

almost every major sociological article on the subject(s) in the following years.

Yinger

Milton Yinger's comprehensive 1957 book, *Religion, Society and the Individual*, deals with many issues surrounding the sociology of religion. The work is grounded in a functionalist approach to the study of religion and religious behaviors (both collective and individual), and draws heavily on the works of Max Weber, particularly with regard to "Religion and Economics" (1957: 195-229) and church-sect theory. Of interest to this study is Yinger's position on "sectarian growth" among America's churches, that is, the unexpected rise in Pentecostal and Pentecostalist groups in the religious landscape.

Yinger is systematic in his presentation of sectarian religious groups, acknowledging, and making a case for, his functionalist approach to the role of religious sects in society, their limitations, and their consequences for adherents and society at large. He presents three factors that account for "sectarian growth" in the twentieth century. By "sectarian growth" Yinger is referring especially, though not exclusively, to Pentecostalist religious groups. The reader should be familiar with Yinger's principle sources; they are: Richard Niebuhr's (1929) *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*; John B. Holt's (1940) article "Holiness Religion: Cultural Shock and Social Reorganization"; A.T. Boisen's (1939) "Religion and Hard Times"; and Liston Pope's (1942) *Millhands and Preachers*. Yinger's factors that account for this growth are: (1) increased isolation due to the "cultural shock" of mass migration from rural areas to urban centers; (2) poverty, and more specifically the powerlessness of the impoverished; and (3) "a need for an emotional expressiveness that is lacking in the dignified and ritualistic services of most of the churches" (1957: 167-168).

Yinger articulates the question that sociologists had been asking about Pentecostals for a few decades, a question that is still asked by sociologists today. "If one asks, as the sociologist of religion is likely to do: What are the total, long-run consequences, for mental health, for economic security, and the like? He is faced with a...difficult question" (1957: 171). Yinger presents two differing views on this question. The first, from A.T. Boisen, describes Pentecostalism as a positive coping mechanism against the distresses of poverty and isolation. It gives them "hope and courage and

strength” to face the various hardships endured by the lower class, and in so doing, likely has a positive effect with regard to the individual’s economic and social status (Boisen 1939: 194). The second view, from S.D. Clark’s study of the Salvation Army in Canada (1948), sees the effects of lower-class, ecstatic religion as diverting attention away from the “real problems of an industrial society” and “retarding the development of working-class organizations” (Clark 1948: 424).

The problem, as Yinger puts it, is that there are many different social forces that can shape a sectarian faith and, by extension, shape the consequences for both the adherents of a given faith and the society at large. Yinger notes some variables which have a direct effect on the type of sect that forms under a given set of conditions. These variables include, but are not limited to: (1) the degree of hope that a group has with respect to improving their economic or social status (and general well-being), (2) the nature of the religious and/or cultural tradition(s) from which the group draws for tools of protest, (3) the concurrence of other (particularly) secular movements, (4) the degree of acculturation to the values of the dominant society by group members, (5) the type of leaders and the degree to which they can influence a group, and lastly (6) the personalities of the group adherents and how they interact with each other. This last point makes it extremely difficult to predict how a particular religious sect will take shape, the influence it will have, or the consequences that will become evident for the adherents. This is because individuals compose a group, and two individuals may respond differently to the same problem, even in identical conditions. Because all of these forces (and possibly more) are at play in the formation of a religious sect, “any attempt to understand religion as a consequence of one or two factors alone will be inadequate” (Yinger 1957: 178).

Nevertheless, after taking into account these variables, Yinger presents his own thoughts on the consequences of “contemporary sects,” though it is of particular relevance for Pentecostalist groups. Yinger notes religious sects’ ability to act as a pain-reliever among those in highly underprivileged positions. For sects of the lower classes it is difficult to cause change in the economic and politic institutions, because they generally lack the training, skills, and inclination to affect change. Yinger does note that in many cases the individual adherents benefit from the self-disciplines and can,

consequently, improve their own status in society. However, as a whole, the sect is “irrelevant to the social and cultural causes that continue to create such disprivileged individuals” (1957: 173).

Taking into account the many variables that are at play in shaping a religious group and determining its potential influence, how then can Yinger account for Weber’s *Protestant Ethic*, which is comparably simple in its argument that modern capitalism emerged successfully as a result of Calvinists’ belief in occupation by “calling” and the development of an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism? Yinger bases much of his work on Weber’s *Protestant Ethic*, not to mention that Weber played an important role in the development of church-sect theory itself. Though he supports the basic thesis of the *Protestant Ethic*, Yinger is critical of Weber’s narrow focus, believing that Weber was “insufficiently alert to the *selective* development of Calvinism” (1957: 215). He believes that though Weber found an important connection between Calvinism and capitalist enterprise, this was just one of many possible connections that could have been made and/or emphasized. Yinger elaborates, “Calvinism did not create the spirit of capitalism, but the needs and tendencies of capitalists were involved in the process which selected from the various possibilities of interpretations of Calvinism” (1957: 216). Largely, Yinger demonstrates that while Weber was correct, what he observed was in essence an historical accident that, if it could be repeated, may or may not produce the same results.

There are several significant aspects in Yinger’s work relevant to the present study. Yinger is unapologetically functionalist in his approach to the study of sects and the typology of religious groups. His concern with Pentecostalism is not direct, but part of his larger quest to make the classification of religious groups more accurate. Yinger also made significant alterations to the typology of church-sect theory. He promoted a six-step classification method of typology, an extension of Howard Becker’s (1932) four types. The classes are: (1) The Universal Church; (2) The Ecclesia; (3) The Class Church or Denomination; (4) The Established Sect; (5) The Sect; and (6) The Cult. The fifth type, the Sect, is further subdivided into three types, according to their *modus operandi*: (a) acceptance, (b) aggression, and (c) avoidance (1957: 147-158). This is a significant alteration to the typology of church-sect theory, and further distances the theory from the ideal types proposed by Weber. This taxonomic approach, as previously mentioned, is

more closely aligned with Troeltsch's use of the terms.

In addition to his extension of church-sect theory, Yinger successfully illustrates the wide range of consequences of any sectarian movement. Though he would not go so far as to call them impossible to predict, he acknowledges the many factors (many of which are not directly related to the sectarian movement in question) that make it difficult to know how a sectarian movement will engage society. He proposes three general categories for sectarian action (acceptance, aggression, and avoidance), though ultimately there is a wide range of avenues whereby any of these categories may be expressed, and of course there may be overlap between categories in different spheres of engagement (i.e. a religious sect may accept the general political structures, but be hostile toward certain aspects of the dominant culture).

Benton Johnson's Pentecostal Ethic

Possibly the most sympathetic sociological study of Pentecostals appeared in 1961 from Benton Johnson. The title of his article, "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant American Values?" is presented hesitantly, because it had been long assumed, just as William Clark had explicitly stated, that Pentecostals and Holiness groups were the result of being alienated from society. Specifically, Johnson is arguing against "...most observers [who] emphasize that the other-worldliness of Holiness belief inclines the individual to make a kind of fantasy-like retreat from what many would call social reality" (1961: 312). Johnson also carried out fieldwork in North Carolina as part of his doctoral dissertation. Though he references "Holiness Sects" as the subject of his research, a closer look reveals that he is in fact speaking of Pentecostals (particularly white Pentecostals), which he sees as a small section within the Holiness denomination (see Johnson 1961: 311).

Johnson's article is the first to make a direct comparison between Pentecostalism and Weber's *Protestant Ethic* by ascribing Pentecostals with Weber's "ethic of inner-worldly asceticism" (1961: 310). This is done by demonstrating that Pentecostals and Holiness sects, as the title of the article states, socialize in dominant American values. Furthermore, it is already assumed that those dominant values of American society share a special relationship with "the values and structure of industrial capitalism" (1961: 310).

Therefore, by demonstrating that Pentecostals socialize in these dominant values it can be inferred that they share in the inner-worldly ascetic ethic that is “the Protestant Ethic.” We must understand that Johnson does not intend to present Pentecostals as uniquely capable in the industrial setting, nor does he imply that Pentecostals possess a greater share of the Protestant ethic; he merely seeks to challenge assumptions that Pentecostals are too “other-worldly” focused to share in the dominant American values that are presumed to make up an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism.

Johnson finds that the dominant emphasis in Pentecostal groups is one that is, or is closely related to, a focus on individual achievement. Secondary to this focus is an emphasis on “democracy, individualism, mobility, and moral respectability” (1961: 310). Johnson, following Yinger, believes that Pentecostals are not wholly concerned with societal or institutional reform, as this most likely detracts from the emphasis on individualism and individual achievement. The process through which people are generally accepted into the religious community is known as “conversion,” an intensely emotional experience which (expectedly) precipitates significant change in the individual. Johnson notes that this effectively acts “to propel Pentecostals to cross a value orientational borderline,” that value orientation being the dominant values of American society (1961: 311).

Johnson’s perspective differs from Yinger slightly when it comes to Pentecostals effecting change. Whereas Yinger believes Pentecostals would be unable to effect change and have therefore found a religious outlet for their frustrations, Johnson argues that a focus on struggling for broad changes in society conflicts with a general focus on individual experience and achievement. This perspective, however, is clearly limited by Johnson’s field research, as there are notable examples of Pentecostal fundamentalists whose primary concern is preserving the Christian society. As Robert Anderson notes, this concern paradoxically reinforces the lower classes’ position as the “disinherited” (see Anderson 1979).

Johnson uses Talcott Parsons’ terminology when he says “acceptance of secular values can be a passive matter or it can be positive,” to which he proposes that the Pentecostal acceptance of “much of society and its values is of a positive...nature” (1961: 313). Johnson draws the reader’s attention to the proscriptive elements of Pentecostalism,

“the suppression of the esthetic, the erotic, the irrational chance-taking or immediately pleasurable aspects of life.” This is directly followed by Max Weber’s description of the inner-worldly ascetic’s mandate, the “destruction of spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment” (1961: 313). Throughout his argument Johnson maintains the dominant view that Pentecostal meetings are “erotically charged,” and this “serves for the lower class persons what more sublimated pursuits of immediate gratification serve for middle and upper class persons.” Johnson then incorporates this to support his argument for the inner-worldly ascetic nature of Pentecostalism, saying that a function of “Holiness emotionalism” is to maintain a high level of motivation to remain committed to the ascetic lifestyle. Presumably, Johnson believes lower-class individuals require such motivation where middle- and upper-class persons do not (1961: 313-314). Essentially, Johnson understands Pentecostalism as having all the necessary qualities of Weber’s inner-worldly ascetic Calvinism, though catered to the Pentecostals’ needs of greater motivation through the promise of ecstasy.

The most interesting part of Johnson’s essay is where he tries to determine Pentecostal attitudes toward a “calling,” in the Weberian sense. Johnson’s aim is clear; he wants to qualify Pentecostalism in Weber’s “model”.¹¹ His use of the Weberian model is almost seamless, as if it needed no qualification of its own. Johnson believes his case is made if the comparison to *The Protestant Ethic* is accurately presented, and offers no justification for the comparison itself. Johnson uses empirical data from interviews with ten Pentecostal pastors to demonstrate Pentecostalist attitudes toward a “calling.” He presents each of his respondents with a story of conflicting values, asking them to choose between a more active, goal-oriented approach toward life, and a more cautious, less achievement-minded outlook on life. The story is as follows:

Two young Christian men are talking about what they are going to do with their lives. One of them says that in his life he is going to aim high. He is going to use his opportunities as they come to him day by day, he is going to develop his talents to the utmost; he is even going to risk failure by setting his own aims so far beyond that he may only partly attain them. The other man says,

¹¹ I use the word “model” loosely, as it has already been pointed out for the reader that Weber made no such model, nor did he intend for *The Protestant Ethic* to be used as a model for modern analysis.

no, that in his life he isn't going to bite off more than he can chew, that he would rather do a little bit all right than make a big mess out of something that he can't handle. Now if you had to give aid and encouragement to one of these two young men, which one would you agree with? (1961: 315)

In all but one of his responses was found some endorsement of the goal-oriented approach to life, though they were mixed in terms of which one they settled on to give aid and encouragement. Admittedly his sample was small, and respondents were all clergy, yet even still, it produced inconclusive results. However, there was one response quoted by Johnson in his essay that bears repeating here. One minister who, after giving a stern warning about the pursuit of "material things," elaborates on his position:

Well, I believe God has a plan for every one of us. If we accept Him then we're obligated to follow that plan for the glory of God...When we're doing what God has planned for us we ought to give God our very best. We ought to aim high, like the man said. If you had a call to the grocery business, then you ought to be ambitious for the glory of God, to be successful for Christ's sake. That other man is a drifter. He's not interested in the glory of God. He's not industrious, just doesn't care. I'm trying to think of some Scripture. One that comes to mind is, "Be not slothful in business."...When I went into the painting business I said I was going to be the best in the business. And I was. (1961: 316)

For Johnson, this illustrates concern for individual achievement and Pentecostals' acceptance of the American ideal that hard work is a virtue. It also demonstrates that Pentecostals are not as other-worldly minded as was generally assumed. Johnson accepts the general hypothesis that the emotionalism displayed by Pentecostals serves as an inferior way of meeting emotional needs by the lower classes, whereas the upper classes achieve this through more "sublimated pursuits" (1961: 313). Acknowledging this, Johnson believes that this has no impact on the end result, which is, accommodating lower classes to the general American values. His measuring stick is Max Weber's Protestant (inner-worldly ascetic) ethic.

It is other-worldly in the sense of expecting the greatest personal joy in the

hereafter, but it involves as a condition of this the devotion to doing the will of God in this world. This will can be realized in almost any kind of activity, but it demands consistent output of effort, a denial of distracting pleasures, and a focus on achievement. The positive emphasis on self-application, consistency, and achievement, are the principle Holiness themes that directly converge with dominant American values. (1961: 316).

Johnson's article is significant in the history of sociological analysis of Pentecostalism for several reasons. (1) It is the first to seriously engage questions about Pentecostalism that go beyond the novelty of what Pentecostalism had represented: an orgiastic exercise in self-abandon. Though he accepts such interpretations of emotional fervor in Pentecostal meetings, his analysis demonstrates that it is peripheral to the central foci of the sect (individual achievement, democracy, etc.). (2) It is also the first article to make comparisons between Pentecostals and Max Weber's ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. The comparison is not direct, but rather apologetic, in the sense that his objective is to demonstrate Pentecostals' relative proximity to the general value orientations of American Protestants. In other words, Pentecostals share in the Protestant ethic as much as other Americans do, and their emotional displays sustain their motivation in the face of adversity. (3) His framework is thoroughly Parsonian, focusing on individual patterns of behavior and values. Appearing in 1961, Johnson's article would be one of the last sociological studies to take this Parsonian framework for granted, as Parson's work would come under fire in the coming years.

Pentecostals and The Great War

For sociologists, the correlation between Pentecostal growth and economic decline was indicative of the constituency that the movement appealed to, and generally supported the assertions that Pentecostalism alleviated the pains of living for the underprivileged. The millenarian focus found among Pentecostals also supported claims that they were indulging in an escapist strategy that created an alternate reality (or the hope for a future alternate reality) in which Pentecostals lived.

By the time the United States joined World War I, or The Great War, as it was known, in 1917, Pentecostals had developed a reputation for their millenarian beliefs,

often in the form of “interpreting” the signs of the impending apocalypse. Though Pentecostals could rarely agree on many theological points after the Azusa Street Revival subsided, they remained steadfast and united in their belief that the era in which they lived was the prophesied “last days” before the second coming of Christ. This apocalyptic worldview formed a foundation from which their protest was launched, a protest that manifested itself more through withdrawal from politics and social organizations than rallies and marches. Believing that the world was on a fast track to destruction, as God’s judgment, the outbreak of The Great War in Europe was added to the long list of “signs” that God was showing to believers that the end time was near. The Great War, in the words of R.G. Robins, “unfolded less a historical event or moral dilemma than as a grand cosmic metaphor” (2010: 52). The eschatological hopes of Pentecostals placed them outside the realm of interpreting the war as for or against the Christian cause, because the war itself fitted well into their apocalyptic narrative. As such, many Pentecostal evangelists spoke out against the war, such as Frank Bartleman, who called it “wholesale murder” (cited in Anderson 1979: 202).

The Great War, however, was unlike the previous “signs” that Pentecostals had witnessed. Unlike the earthquake in San Francisco of 1906 or the Great Lakes Storm of 1913, the Great War created a binary which was characterized by a “with us or against us” slogan. The Great War stirred Americans to rejoice in and display the patriotic spirit. Patriotism, like its cousin, nationalism, carries with it the virtue of loyalty, among others. This binary forced many Pentecostals to re-evaluate their positions and adopt the patriotic spirit or face accusations of treason. Many Pentecostals resisted the call to arms, speaking out against the war. Though, as Anderson notes, the war served as a rallying cry for those Pentecostals seeking a cause around which they could unite, as well as integrate with the larger Fundamentalist and Evangelical circles (Anderson 1979). In this way, the war served as an integrating event, pushing Pentecostals into a closer relationship with the society that had rejected them. As World War I came to a close a number of new traveling evangelists built their reputations along with new ministries. Many of these ministries were not built around support for the war, but rather using the war as a “sign of the times,” a call to spiritually awaken and return to moral and spiritual rectitude. Among these were Thomas Wyatt, John G. Lake, F.F. Bosworth, Raymond T. Richey, Aimee

Semple McPherson, and British-born Smith Wigglesworth. Though not all of these evangelists had direct ties with a Pentecostal denomination, all of them believed they had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and all of them were known as healing evangelists. Beliefs in, and reports of, divine healing were not new to Pentecostalism or Christianity. The revivalism of the mid-nineteenth century heralds many stories of miraculous healings from diseases and conditions. Early Pentecostals, too, reported many incidents of divine healing, and many sermons preached on the healing power of the Holy Spirit. However, the names above are unique in establishing whole ministries, careers, and reputations around the ability to cure disease and heal incapacitating conditions.

Healing crusades were beginning to become popular, pioneered by an eclectic character whose healing ministry predates the Azusa Street Revival. Alexander Dowie was born in Scotland, but spent most of his childhood and adolescence in Australia, where he first began to preach divine healing in 1882 (Harrell 1975: 13). In 1893, he moved to Chicago where he attracted much attention for his teachings on healing, both from spectators and authorities (he was frequently arrested for his healing escapades) (1975: 13). In 1900, Dowie purchased 6000 acres of land north of Chicago and announced that he was establishing a new city, Zion, which would serve as a “paradise for the righteous.” This project attracted ten thousand new settlers, but would culminate in the ousting of Dowie in 1906, due to his tyrannical administration of the city and his “taste for personal luxury,” causing serious financial problems for the settlement (1975: 13). Dowie’s notoriety was not always positive, but he was the first to gain national attention to the Healing Revival, and from his tutelage would come many others to carry on the message of divine healing, including F.F. Bosworth and John G. Lake, the first missionary to take the Pentecostal message to South Africa. Consequently, Dowie’s influence is particularly apparent in African Initiated Churches (AICs), such as the Zion Christian Church, the largest AIC denomination in South Africa that takes its name from Dowie’s utopian building project. Despite the obvious importance and influence of Alexander Dowie and his ministry, he became increasingly alienated because of his outspoken criticisms of both church and state (Anderson, A. 2004: 31). Many of those that were at the cusp of the wave that would be the Healing Revivals, had one or another connection with Dowie.

Into the Roaring Twenties

After the armistice with Germany in 1918, Americans began to ease into “normal” life again. Fuel restrictions were lifted and city lights returned to lighting up the streets, signaling the end of a time when patriotism required the American to endure the sacrifices that were part and parcel of the war effort. But now the war was over, and the subsequent “Big Red Scare” turned out not to be so scary after all. It was time to march into the twenties with confidence and indulgence.

In the first year of the new decade the first radio broadcasting station opened the airwaves on November 2, 1920, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a technological innovation which Frederick Lewis Allen declared “was destined ultimately to alter the daily habits of Americans as profoundly as anything that decade produced” (Allen 1931: 8). It took some years to achieve popular appeal, but when it did, radio achieved more than newspapers or magazines could ever achieve with regard to penetrating the American household and creating the American collective identity.

Fueling the fire of fundamentalism was “The Revolution in Manners and Morals” which titles Allen’s third chapter in his informal history of the decade, *Only Yesterday* (Allen 1931). Every summer in that decade conservatives gasped at the ever-shortening hem on women’s skirts. F. Scott Fitzgerald introduced the public to a new generation, the women of which were proudly un-Victorian in their behavior and ethics. Significant changes were taking place in America’s younger generation, and it was not restricted to women’s fashion. Women fought for their right to vote, and won. Women decided it did not have to be “un-lady like” to smoke a cigarette or have a drink in a bar. Even sex was not the taboo it once was for a respectable woman (Allen 1931: 9). Freedom and indulgence became the hallmark for the new generation, much to the chagrin of the former.

Fundamentalism had gained a significant following in the decade leading up to the twenties by those that feared the potential effect of Darwinism, godless socialism, and Higher Criticism of the Bible. Now fundamentalists watched in horror as their morality, values, and propriety were also in danger of erosion. This perceived two-pronged attack from science and intellect on the one hand, and the counter-culture movement on the

other, proved to swell the ranks of fundamentalists and united them further in their resolve to protect that which they held dear—the Bible and conservative Christian society.

The economic boom of post-war America began in 1921 and continued largely uninterrupted until the great stock-market crash of 1929. These years of prosperity were fueled by the customary naiveté that precedes any great disaster and is only observed in hindsight. Prosperity, however, was not all-inclusive. Technological advances in machinery allowed farmers to maximize their efficiency, only to see overproduction lead to plummeting prices in staple crops, stifling expected gains that were meant to justify mass reductions in staff due to new machinery. Southerners watched in dismay as women suddenly acquired a distaste for cotton fabric, the demand for which had fueled the Southern economy for more than a century (Allen 1931: 13). Of course, other industries were booming. Mass production of the automobile was in overdrive, as well as many other modern machines. These swift changes in industry resulted in a mass exodus from the field to the factory, where assembly line production became almost synonymous with labor. Whereas fundamentalist Protestantism attracted those overcome with alarm for the erosion of morality, commonly associated with the Jazz Age, it was Pentecostalism that reached out to those who had to live through the hardships associated with the changes in industry, migration to large cities, and adjustment to a faster paced, efficiency driven decade. It is in this context that we find a common thread uniting Pentecostal adherents in the early twentieth century. Anderson elaborates, saying:

Coming as they did from diverse racial and ethnic, regional and religious backgrounds, the working poor—and the Pentecostals—had at least two things in common. First they came largely from rural-agrarian origins and experienced either the culture shock of transplantation to urban areas or, in the case of those who remained on the land, the pain of adjustment to conditions of rural decay stemming from urban-industrialization...Second, their adjustment to new and changing circumstances was exacerbated by their generally low social status. For a preponderant majority of the working poor—and, again, of the Pentecostals—were either Negroes, recent immigrants, or marginal farmers of the Southern uplands. (Anderson 1979: 226)

Anderson does not exactly equate Pentecostal belief and membership of “the working poor,” as he notes that a relatively small percentage of those that belonged to the working poor actually became Pentecostal. However small the percentage may be, the working poor made up an overwhelming constituency in early Pentecostalism. The 1920s simultaneously institutionalized the working poor as an integral part of the thriving capitalist economy and altered the reality of the working poor.

Sister Aimee and the Fundamentalist Pentecostals

The roaring twenties also witnessed the rise of one of America’s greatest celebrities of the era, Aimee Semple McPherson, who dominated newspaper headlines and radio waves, had followings in the tens of thousands—though many more had an opinion about her—and furthermore, was Pentecostal. McPherson and her ministry achieved a level of popular appeal unrivaled during her time. F.L. Allen’s informal history of the twenties, *Only Yesterday*, was published in 1931 and gave McPherson a passing mention when talking about the summer of 1926, saying: “the disappearance from a bathing beach of Aimee Semple McPherson, evangelist of a Four-Square Gospel made in California – a disappearance that was to prove the first in a series of opera-bouffe episodes which for years attracted wide-eyed tourists in droves to McPherson’s Angelus Temple” (Allen 1931: 15). Her charismatic and innovative approach to evangelism, combined with her constant association with one or another controversy, promoted “Sister Aimee” to a central place in American religious history. Douglas Jacobson says:

Aimee Semple McPherson was in a class by herself. She was winsome, flamboyant, theatrical, sincere, practical, generous, embracing, and opinionated all at the same time. Sister Aimee...was by far the most visible of all first-generation pentecostal leaders. No one else even came close. (2006: 185)

American religion was ripe for McPherson’s charismatic personality and conservative agenda in the 1920s. Max Weber may not have been surprised by McPherson’s success in the context of 1920s America, had he lived to witness it. Doyle Paul Johnson brings Weber’s disposition into perspective when he writes:

Nevertheless, he [Weber] regarded the rationalized bureaucratic structures of modern societies with considerable pessimism because of their failure to incorporate opportunities for emotional expressiveness or discourse regarding ultimate values. In this environment, some people could be susceptible to the appeal of charismatic religious leaders who promise an ultimate meaning system and moral values that are more emotionally satisfying than the restrictive 'iron cage' structures of bureaucratic rationality and technical efficiency. (Johnson 2007: 44)

More generally this speaks to Pentecostalism's position in society, but McPherson was unique in her ability to attract a broader and more diverse audience than Pentecostalism had previously been able to achieve.

Though Jacobson calls McPherson a "first-generation pentecostal," McPherson's relationship with Pentecostalism was not as straightforward as he suggests. Many aspects of her ministry demonstrate an undeniable Pentecostal character, and she traces her own spiritual awakening to a Pentecostal experience while attending church services led by the Pentecostal evangelist, Robert Semple—with whom she married and began a life devoted to ministry. She often spoke in tongues, testified to the power of the Holy Spirit, and had faith in healing miracles. Despite these Pentecostal traits, Aimee Semple McPherson did not affiliate herself with any denominational persuasion, but instead saw herself as a mere Christian called by God to unite other Christians through sermons that resonated with the average, conservative individual of her time. Instead of proclaiming doctrines in her speeches, she more often delivered allegorical sermons designed to make hearers laugh and emotionally connect with McPherson's general fundamentalist disposition. "Her main concern was the incitement of feelings of sympathy, joy, happiness, hope, and security in her audiences," says Ebeling (1957: 155). Matthew Avery Sutton elaborates saying "[McPherson] found that mixing her real-life adventures with drama, spectacle, and scripture could transform the simple gospel of personal salvation into a spell binding epic" (2007: 68).

McPherson began her path to fame touring America in her "gospel car," a 1912 Packard touring car she had covered with religious slogans. Aimee preached her message

while traversing the American terrain between 1916 and 1918—not an easy feat, considering few roads were paved, and by 1919, the average speed limit was twenty miles per hour, fifteen in residential areas (Allen 1931: 5). As McPherson's reputation grew, her Christian orientation steadily became more Fundamentalist and less Pentecostal. Though these two dispositions are not mutually exclusive, Pentecostals were generally disparaged by Fundamentalists in the early twentieth century. Pentecostals were quick to point out that they were and had always been fundamentalist in their approach to scripture and in their resolve to preserve Christian morality in America (Anderson 1979). Fundamentalists, however, often saw Pentecostals in much the same way the rest of Christian America had: hysterical, fanatical, and/or insane. By minimizing attention paid to the practice of speaking in tongues and favoring order and organization in her services, Aimee Semple McPherson was able to escape much of the ridicule that had been heaped on Pentecostals. This also allowed her to appeal to a much broader audience than typical Pentecostal leaders whose zeal tended to have polarizing effects. This is evidenced by McPherson's own congregation in which "nine out of ten of Aimee's followers were converts from orthodox Protestant creeds, migrants from small town and farming areas of the Middle West" (McWilliams 1949, cited in Ebeling 1957: 59).

The fact that McPherson was able to attract so many followers from mainstream Protestantism speaks to just how different McPherson's Christianity was from early Pentecostalism. Still, McPherson is usually regarded as a Pentecostal evangelist and often given credit for making Pentecostalism respected in the United States. Vinson Synan confirms this, saying:

The advent of Aimee Semple McPherson marked a turning point in the history of the Pentecostal movement in the United States. The first Pentecostal well-known to the public at large, McPherson did much to gain tolerance and respect for a religion generally associated with the lowest social strata. Indeed, "Sister Aimee" proved that Pentecostals were capable of producing preachers with as strong a public appeal as the more traditional evangelists. (Synan 1997: 203)

While it may be true that McPherson proved that a Pentecostal could win as much public appeal as any other evangelist in America, it is not clear that McPherson's efforts proved

that Pentecostalism could gain as much public appeal as mainstream Protestant sects. The difference here is that Aimee Semple McPherson was indeed a celebrity, but Pentecostalism as a religious disposition had yet to flourish in the same manner as her career. This disparity is implied by Vinson Synan, as he later says:

By 1930 there were many indications of trends the Pentecostal movement would follow in the future. It was clear by that time that Pentecostalism would appeal primarily to the lower classes; but as the lower classes became upwardly mobile, the Pentecostals would rise with them. The social transformation of Pentecostal churches into middle-class institutions would come not by converting the middle class, but by entering it *en masse* from below. (Synan 1997: 203)

If we include McPherson's Christianity and her followers as Pentecostals, then they stand in exception to the trends noticed by Synan. McPherson was successful in attracting middle-class conservatives away from the traditional Protestant denominations and into, at least, a Pentecostal-esque form of Christianity. McPherson's exceptionality has been recognized by many, most often for her innovative approaches to evangelism and church service organization. Grover C. Loud, writing in 1928, says:

Apart from her personality, which, after all, has its parallels in other kinds of endeavor, Sister Aimee's sole contribution within her chosen field lies in making the most of modern methods, inventions and ingenuities—lighting and scenic effects, the radio and the craft of the motion pictures—and evolved by experiment her own combination adapted to the service of theatric evangelism. (Loud 1928: 322)

Loud's portrait of McPherson draws considerable attention to her "theatric evangelism" in an ambiguous, if not satirical fashion. We see McPherson as the new charismatic evangelist, whose cunning extends further than eloquence and exciting rhetoric that defined the revivalist who preceded her.

Here, we find a central contradiction that contributed to Sister Aimee's success. McPherson was both an innovator and a traditionalist. Sutton describes this blending

when he says “McPherson changed the way American religion is practiced. She combined the old-time faith, show biz sensibilities, marketing savvy, and passionate Americanism to revive a seemingly dead movement” (2007: 4). McPherson’s charisma was wholly modern, employing pageantry and technology to fill her Angelus Temple to three times the seating capacity. Pushing the Christian message through novel avenues using novel means, Sister Aimee spoke to her crowd while simultaneously broadcasting her message over the radio waves. The radio craze had not yet fully gripped the American public, for at the time she began broadcasting, less than five percent of American homes had a radio, though this would rapidly change—by the 1950s, only five percent of American homes did not own a radio (Hangen 2002: 113). Yet, through all her innovations in preaching and use of technology and media, McPherson’s message was clearly anti-modern. She radically opposed the teaching of evolution and sent thank-you telegrams to William Jennings Bryan for his work in the famous Scopes Trial of 1925. She supported the prohibition movement to ban the production and sale of alcohol, and she defended literalist interpretations of the Bible. Her cause was essentially a Fundamentalist one, seeking to defend traditional (Christian) values from the corrosive effect of modernity. Ebeling noted, “In an era when a dispute was in progress between ‘fundamentalist’ and ‘modernist’ churches, she was irrevocably on the side of the ‘fundamentalists’” (Ebeling 1957: 155). McPherson successfully negotiated the contradiction of embracing modernity to disperse an anti-modern message, and as a result attracted followers in the tens of thousands.

McPherson’s ministry earned more than just followers. Loud reports of McPherson’s ability to raise remarkable amounts of money to further her endeavors. Her Angelus Temple, worth \$628,390 in 1926, was built using only money donated from inspired contributors, and was owned by Aimee herself (Loud 1928: 322). In one day she raised five thousand dollars to purchase a new car, because the car she had purchased one year earlier was already “getting ‘positively shabby’” (Loud 1928: 332). She was the first to ask believers through the radio to mail in their donations, which arrived to the Temple on a weekly basis (Loud 1928: 332).

On May 18, 1926, Aimee Semple McPherson went with her secretary to Ocean Park Beach in Los Angeles. After separating from her secretary for a short time,

McPherson mysteriously vanished. It was quickly assumed that she had fallen into the sea and drowned, which sparked a media frenzy, daily seaside vigils, and an extensive search and rescue operation that resulted in the deaths of two would-be rescuers. Almost a month after her disappearance, McPherson emerged out of the Mexican desert claiming that she had been kidnapped and held for ransom. She was somehow able to escape her assailants and walk through the desert to Agua Prieta, a Mexican border town a short distance from Douglas, Arizona (Sutton 2007).

Immediately, people began to cast doubts on McPherson's alleged kidnapping. Several witnesses claimed to have spotted McPherson while she was missing in the company of Kenneth Ormiston, a married radio engineer who was also mysteriously missing at the same time, and had connections with McPherson. Ormiston later admitted to having an affair with another woman, though claimed it was someone other than Aimee McPherson. The scandal became national headlines and led to a very public trial in which a grand jury was called to determine the veracity of Aimee Semple McPherson's story. In early 1927, the prosecution eventually dropped all charges of the case. Loud devotes considerable attention to Aimee Semple McPherson's kidnapping scandal and subsequent trial. He rightly notes that although McPherson was a successful businesswoman and evangelist, it was the alleged kidnapping and conspiracy to commit fraud that propelled McPherson to the national stage, and suggests that this may have been her plan all along (Sutton 2007).

But what was it about this mysterious and intriguing figure that we can say was Pentecostal? Certainly her conversion, as she tells it, was to a Pentecostal form of holiness, which included speaking in tongues and belief in a miracle-god. She indeed carried that with her in her early ministry, traveling the American landscape with healing crusades. But by the time she reached national headlines we see little affiliation with anything the public considered Pentecostal. Even as Grover Loud wrote about her ministry at its apex, he delineates the former McPherson who was versed in "holy rollerism" and the new McPherson who preached a patriotic message for the burgeoning middle class, with only hints of the former Pentecostal believer to be found in the way "she strokes her tambourine" (Loud 1928: 328). As already noted, at least ninety percent of her followership came from mainline orthodox denominations, not the Pentecostal

denominations, which were well established by the time McPherson christened her Angelus Temple.

Only through the gift of hindsight do we see McPherson and her ministry as part of the history of Pentecostalism. In her time she was something wholly different than the “holy rollers,” whose methods were “crude as well as vigorous” and whose “shaking of the timbrel induced a contagion of saltatory hysteria” (Loud 1928: 328). Early Pentecostals were accused of being unruly, loud, and unrestrained—to the point that it was widely believed that the noises coming from Pentecostal gatherings were evidence of sexual orgies taking place inside. McPherson’s services, on the other hand, were more composed, and under her control. Her rhetorical skills were employed for “keeping her listeners in a continual state of alertness, for calling them back to the progress of the discourse, and for stimulating them to active response” (Ebeling 1957: 159). Historians of religion would later include McPherson in the Pentecostal tradition as the century unfolded and brought with it many charismatic revivals, each of them unique, many of them reminiscent of the Azusa Street Revival. McPherson opened the door for revivalists to embrace technology, and with it, a pragmatic approach to gaining attention and support from the masses, an approach that has spawned a new and necessary field of research, namely, religion and media.

McPherson’s contributions to the landscape of religion are far reaching. Her example as a leader of tens of thousands of believers, at least a million dollars in cash and assets, and an expanding empire was a league above the male evangelists of her day, yet she accomplished these feats at a time when most Christians thought it improper for a woman to even stand in the pulpit. McPherson was able to capture the pulse of a generation fearful of what the “roaring twenties” had ushered into American culture, and offer that generation a sensational mode of religious expression that embraced the technology of the day and maintained an ambiance of dignity that eluded the Pentecostal movement in the public imagination.

Healing Revivals

During the 1920s, when Aimee Semple McPherson rose to prominence and her ministry blossomed, there were many Pentecostal denominational networks and many more

independent Pentecostal congregations. McPherson built her own church which grew into a denomination of its own. Though she became renowned as an eloquent preacher, her fame grew initially as a result of her touring healing ministry. Most Pentecostals share a belief in the possibility of divine healing, and prayer for such a miraculous intervention is perhaps “the most universal characteristic of the many varieties of Pentecostalism” (Anderson, A. 2004: 30). There were many other evangelists who started independent ministries during this period, a significant number of whom made divine healing the centerpiece of their ministry. Most of these evangelists had some ties with Pentecostal churches and denominations, yet a surprising number labored to prevent the association with Pentecostalism. Charles S. Price, an English evangelist who was inspired by McPherson’s ministry to take up a career in healing evangelism, refused to align with any Pentecostal church, vehemently maintaining an independence. Also, William Branham, one of the most famous of the healing evangelists, was a pastor of a Baptist church when he received the gift of healing and began his ministry. When Branham was asked to conduct revivals for several Pentecostal churches early in his career, he refused, due to their “dubious social reputation” (Harrell 1975: 29).

While Pentecostals may not have had a great reputation, it may have been their divisiveness and squabbling that made many evangelists wary of proclaiming allegiance to this or that denomination. This would change in time, culminating in a more cooperative spirit among Pentecostals and others operating through “the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.” Generally, these healing evangelists had a commitment to unity among all Christians who sought to shed the barriers of denominationalism. Harrell notes that by 1948, a “pan-Pentecostal movement was well under way at the denominational level” and in 1943, Pentecostals were accepted as charter members of the National Association of Evangelicals, provoking Pentecostal leaders to be “‘astonished’ by the loving reception they received from the evangelicals, who had rudely rejected them in the 1930s” (Harrell 1985: 147). Branham later reconsidered his refusal to join the Pentecostals and participated in many revivals and healing crusades with Pentecostals, though he always remained an “independent Baptist minister” (Harrell 1975: 28).

William Branham

William Branham was born into abject poverty in the Appalachian mountainsides of eastern Kentucky in 1909. The son of a sixteen year-old girl and an eighteen year-old alcoholic father, Branham felt called to preach and launched his ministerial career at the age of twenty-four, preaching underneath a tent in Jeffersonville, Kentucky, to crowds numbering as many as three thousand (Harrell 1975: 28). A poor man preaching to poor people, Branham's ministry would take to a new level in May of 1946, after Branham claimed to be visited by an angel that told him he would receive the gift of healing, the sign of which would be a trembling in Branham's left hand (1975: 29). Branham's reputation grew as a great man of God with healing powers, and soon Branham had invitations from churches all across the country, requesting his presence to lead healing revivals. Branham enlisted the help of Gordon Lindsay to help organize his meetings and revivals, a choice that proved to be wise, as Branham's success was more than he could manage (1975: 32). His message was simple and purposely avoided controversial subjects, always stressing unity rather than doctrine.

Branham reached international success through tours of Europe and Africa in the early fifties. The stories of Branham's miraculous healing ability became legends worldwide, including reports of Branham raising the dead on more than one occasion (1975: 36). By 1949, thousands of ribbons that Branham had prayed over were being distributed across the globe, many believing they carried the anointing of "Brother Branham" to heal diseases (1975: 36). Chronicling Branham's ministry was *The Voice of Healing*, a magazine started by Gordon Lindsay, Jack Moore and Moore's daughter, Anna Jeanne (1975: 36). *The Voice of Healing* was just one of numerous periodicals that sprung up to cover the healing ministries, becoming a central part of the revivals themselves.

Branham's healing ministry was very successful at taking in money. Branham himself did not involve himself in the money matters of the ministry, as he felt his gift was in healing and speaking, and was well aware of his deficiencies as a manager. This led many to believe that some of Branham's managers were taking advantage of him when the ministry was suddenly struck with financial problems in 1955. Branham wrote:

For nine years, the Lord met every need without my having to pull for money. Then, in 1955, in each of three of my greatest meetings, the income fell far short of expenses and others stepped in to make up large deficits. (cited in Nickel 1956, in Harrell 1975: 39)

Branham's manager paid personal income taxes on almost \$80,000 for the year in 1956, while Branham only reported a personal income of \$7,000. Branham's failures to make a systematic account of the thousands of dollars that flowed through his ministry eventually led to an indictment by the Internal Revenue Service for tax evasion, the result of which was a \$40,000 fine that Branham could never pay (1975: 40). Despite these difficulties, Branham always believed he was on the precipice of some new ministry that God was going to grant him. He always believed his brightest and most successful days were ahead of him and increasingly became concerned with impersonators of his ministry (1975: 41).

This last concern was not unfounded, as by the time Branham was sued by the IRS, there were many ministries like Branham's, many of them started by men that became inspired or "called" to evangelism during one of Branham's revivals (Harrell 1975: 40). Branham eventually was unable to compete with the scores of evangelists who also had received gifts of healing. His legacy did, however, live on. Thousands of Branhamites, or "Message Believers," believe today that William Branham was the last true prophet from God. Branham's sermons are distributed as sacred literature by Voice of God Recordings, with forty-four international offices, twenty of which are in Africa, and five of these in South Africa. It is difficult to say how many Branhamites there are in the world today, as their message is largely centered on breaking down denominational barriers and they prefer to be identified only as Christians. Nevertheless, Branham's sermons are available in South Africa in thirteen different languages (Branham.org 2011).

Oral Roberts

While Branham may have inspired many others to become healing evangelists, there was one evangelist whose ministry eclipsed them all—that of Oral Roberts. Roberts was also born to a poor family, though not to the degree of Branham's. The son of a Pentecostal

Pastor, Oral Roberts began his ministry at a young age and in time built an empire that came to encompass a printing press, television programs, and eventually, a university. Whereas Branham's success was rapid and unexpected, Roberts' was systematic and controlled. Roberts had a keen sense of organization and business principles. Harrell writes:

The growth of Oral Roberts's crusades was accompanied by a parallel expansion in the size and scope of his organization. At the same time that Oral's energies were being consumed by sermon preparation, preaching before huge audiences, and the emotionally exhausting ritual of praying for the sick, he was forced to become a business executive and to try to construct a rational organization to support his crusade team. In the long run, it was his skills in this area—his ability to manage, to recruit talented assistants, and to share responsibility—that most clearly set him apart from the other deliverance evangelists of his generation. (Harrell 1985: 111)

Roberts represented a new breed of Pentecostal, the successful and socially mobile Christian, enthused and ready to take over the world for Jesus. Pentecostalism had continued to gain members during the first half of the century, even after traditional churches had seen declines in membership (Hollenweger 1972: 33). Pentecostals were no longer relegated to the lowest strata of society. Some were even "losing contact with the lower social groups" and were seen "play[ing] golf with people of social standing and no longer preached against make-up and cinema-going" (Hollenweger 1972: 34). By the late 1950s, Oral Roberts and his wife Evelyn had a circle of celebrity friends, discovering that "the nation's elite" were no different from themselves (Harrell 1985: 177). Oral and Evelyn realized that they themselves had become celebrities as well (1985: 178). This was not limited to the United States, for Roberts was known worldwide for his radio shows and campaigns in many countries. When Roberts began his first campaign in South Africa in 1955, he "was stunned at the size of the crowds, most of whom knew of him because of his radio program," and claimed that he was informed that his radio program was the most listened to half-hour of radio in South and Central Africa (Harrell 1985: 138). His campaign in South Africa was an extremely successful one, breaking

attendance records at Wembley Stadium in Johannesburg, and reporting that 30,000 people had converted as a result of the campaign. This success led to a second campaign to South Africa in 1957, this time adding Durban, and Salisbury, in what was then known as Rhodesia, to the itinerary. Again the campaign was met with great success, leading Roberts to declare that he was “particularly pleased by the reception he received from the black Africans” and “the *awareness* of the natives in Africa to the reality of God is one of the most outstanding things I have ever seen” (Harrell 1985: 140).

Oral Roberts’ career reads like Bruce Barton’s (1925) interpretation of the life of Jesus in *The Man Nobody Knows*. Roberts was obsessed with increasing efficiency and expansion. His organization determined in 1951 that “Oral could save souls ‘at a cost of only approximately five dollars per person,’” and by 1953, they were eager to report that they had reduced that cost to two dollars per person (Harrell 1985: 141). Roberts’ role as an innovator is perhaps best represented in his use of new and successful fundraising methods. Oral developed the notion of the “Blessing Pact” to raise money for his television pilots in 1954. The scheme, put frankly, was a plea for donations to the ministry, with Oral’s personal guarantee that any money donated to the ministry would be divinely returned to the giver from a “totally unexpected source” (Harrell 1985: 142). Roberts was so confident that he promised that if this did not happen by the end of the year, then the person could write to his organization and he would refund the same amount donated “immediately and no questions asked” (1985: 142).

At the time, this appeared to be nothing more than a fundraising strategy, though Roberts claimed that God had impressed upon him to initiate the “Blessing Pact” idea. The strategy was successful in garnering donations, but its impact rippled much further than fundraising, as this is occasionally referred to as the origins of the “Prosperity Gospel.” Roberts’ innovation became the basis for a new theological paradigm in which God wants his followers to be successful and wealthy, and gives enigmatic clues on how this can be attained. There is no evidence to suggest that Robert envisioned a new form of Christianity centered around a “Health and Wealth Theology.” His “Blessing Pact” was consistent with his relentless devotion to expanding the Kingdom of God and saving souls for Christ. More importantly, the success of Roberts’ strategy demonstrates the changes in the economic means of Pentecostalism’s constituency. It is hard to imagine

the same amounts of money that Roberts raised coming from the Pentecostals of the early twentieth century. Hollenweger (1972) and others (see Goldschmidt 1944; Harrell 1975) have pointed out the increased social mobility of Pentecostals leading up to (and after) World War II. Harrell describes the atmosphere just prior to Healing Revivals:

And so, the times were ripe. Pentecostalism had become affluent enough to support mass evangelism. It had become tolerant enough to overlook doctrinal differences. Convictions were still deep enough that there was a longing for revival. As the older generation thrilled to memories of the miracle ministries of the 1920s, the young yearned for a new rain of miracles. (Harrell 1975: 20)

The combination of greater economic status and cooperation were the tools that made the healing revivals possible. Both William Branham and Oral Roberts contributed valuable innovations that would make the next big revival, the Charismatic Revivals, possible. Branham stressed ecumenism and was a supporter of non-denominationalism. Roberts' attention to detail and powerful organizational skills became a hallmark for successful ministries in the latter half of the twentieth century. The focus on media proved to be fruitful for Oral Roberts' ministry. This focus also supported the movement toward cooperation, as it became a legitimate forum for networks to be established and maintained. In time, Roberts' media connections (television, magazine, newsletter, etc.) went from a legitimate forum to a premier forum for exposure of new ministries. As such, it became attractive to drop denominational affiliations and support the ecumenical push toward revival. The Healing Revivals were characterized by electric personalities that could win souls and supporters, but as the Healing Revival began to fade, "organizational skill became infinitely more important than platform ability" (Harrell 1975: 135).

Of course, the celebrities of the Healing Revivals were not illustrative of the followers. The eclectic personalities that achieved recognition and (in some cases) wealth through Pentecostalism were able to do so precisely because of those unique qualities that suddenly had a market throughout the U.S. during the 1920's and afterward. Their followers continued to remain a diverse amalgam of believers with a plethora of religious sensitivities that were still largely held together by the groupings of social scientists and scholars of religion.

Conclusion

By the time Richard Niebuhr (1929) had articulated the economic lines of denominationalism, and wrote his treatise to encourage ecumenical developments, the seeds had already been sewn to move in that direction. A significant portion of Pentecostals were already becoming more socially and economically mobile, and there was a significant push toward non-denominationalism among “Spirit-filled” Christians. Pentecostalism continued to attract the marginalized to its ranks, which were the focus of sociologists as they elaborated and extended church-sect theory in a Parsonian framework. These sociologists would by and large come to the same conclusions regarding Pentecostalism and its role in society, though there is a noticeable progression toward a more sympathetic and inclusive perspective. Still, the ministries of Aimee Semple McPherson, William Branham, and Oral Roberts, while undoubtedly sharing a Pentecostal heritage, stand out in stark contrast to the generalities presented by sociologists. And yet these ministries were among the most successful Pentecostal ministries in the first half of the twentieth century. This does not suggest that the analyses discussed are inaccurate, but rather demonstrates the evolving diversity of the movement that was present from the beginning.

Looking at the relationship between Pentecostalism and the sociology of religion, it becomes apparent that sociologists had differing perspectives on Pentecostals. This seems directly related to the intentions of the individual study. We cannot easily compare Richard Niebuhr’s (1929) perspective of Pentecostals to that of Milton Yinger (1957), as Niebuhr was writing with the goal to discourage denominationalism in Christianity, while Yinger was focused on detailing a comprehensive account of the formation of sects, and the dialectics that exist and create and sustain these sects (or cause them to dissipate). Yinger has a specific illustrative purpose for Pentecostalism to aid the development of theory, whereas Benton Johnson’s (1961) work with Pentecostals led him to a critique of church-sect theory. Johnson’s critique would resonate with many scholars who found the church-sect typology confusing and unhelpful. This would lead to the rejection of church-sect theory by many sociologists. Before Hollenweger’s *The Pentecostals* (1972) appeared (Allan Anderson refers to Hollenweger as the “founding father of academic

research into Pentecostalism”), the study of Pentecostal groups was useful only insofar as it served the development (or critique) of theory. In sociology, the theories in question, when Pentecostals were mentioned, were invariably linked to Max Weber. Whether it was through the functional framework articulated by Talcott Parsons, the illustration of sectarian processes, or comparison with *The Protestant Ethic*, the work of Max Weber was at the center of sociological analyses of Pentecostals.

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Chapter 4

Secularization Theory and the Charismatic Revival

Introduction

By the mid-1960s, sociologists began to question the use and usefulness of church-sect theory. Some claimed that there were too many existing definitions and called for a consensus of meaning. Coleman relates the state of the theory in 1968, saying, “wide acquaintance with the literature on church-sect leaves the reader lost in a mass of conflicting and arbitrary definitions” (1968: 59). He goes on to claim that “probably nowhere in sociological discourse is essential consensus on meaning of concepts so lacking” (Coleman 1968: 59). Coleman argued that the typologies had ventured too far from their beginnings in the works of Weber, Troeltsch, and Niebuhr. Allen Eister went further and claimed that conceptualization of church-sect typology among sociologists had become “unreliable” and consequently the “use of church-sect typologies seems scientifically untenable” (Eister 1967: 85, 88). In an even more scathing criticism, Erich Goode concluded in 1967 that “unless it undergoes a radical revision which is universally accepted by researchers and theorists in the field, church-sect must be seen as a dead concept, obsolete, sterile, and archaic” (Goode 1967: 77). From Goode’s perspective, the theory “has no power to explain or elucidate” (1967: 77). By 1974, John Snook voiced the general feeling that church-sect theory had “probably reached its limit” and suggested parameters for an alternative to church-sect theory (Snook 1974: 192).

The multiplicity of definitions surrounding church-sect theory was indicative of sociologists’ attempts to accommodate the increasing number of exceptional cases put forward. One such exceptional case that became a reference point for attacks on the theory was Benton Johnson’s (1957, 1961) study of Pentecostals. Though some attempts to revive church-sect theory can be seen in the late twentieth century, it appears that the sociology of religion will not see a dramatic return of church-sect theory, at least not to the status it once enjoyed.

Secularization theory has followed a similar trajectory to church-sect theory in several aspects. In fact, secularization theory may be the only sociological model that was

more often taken for granted than church-sect theory. If the boisterous crash of a theory falling from prominence is indicative of the status from which it fell, then secularization theory fell from great heights indeed. Peter Berger, the sociologist who was once renowned for his lucid construction of social realities in *The Sacred Canopy* (1967), is now perhaps best known for his public admission that he was wrong about the inevitability of secularization. Few others have come forward so candidly as Berger to admit their overzealous faith in secularization, though many have subsequently changed their position on the issue. However, it never really has been a single issue. In fact, you could not even really call it a single theory. It is more accurately described as a paradigm in which many theories have been presented, often differing greatly in substance. Still, like much of Weber's work, there is a general sense about what is meant by "secularization" and this is more often assumed as articulated.

Peter Berger, Harvey Cox and David Martin have all dedicated a significant portion of their post-secularization career researching and publishing on Pentecostalism. Secularization theory, similar to church-sect theory, was befuddled by the expansive growth of Pentecostalism and its peculiar resistance to sociological categorization. Interestingly, both church-sect theory and secularization theory have roots in the works of Max Weber, though neither share a straightforward origin with the German father of sociology of religion.

This chapter will discuss the rise of secularization theory, reaching an apex in the 1960s and 1970s, before quickly falling out of favor. Also discussed is the Charismatic Revival that coincided with the rise and fall of secularization theory, though unlike secularization theory, Charismatic Christianity (or Neo-Pentecostalism) has continued to flourish. This chapter seeks not only to present two coinciding events in history, but rather to demonstrate the peculiar position of Pentecostalism as a stumbling block for sociological theories of religion, particularly those stemming from Max Weber. Just as Pentecostalism was a vibrant part of religious life when church-sect theory rose to prominence, the Charismatic Revival was a *tour de force* when secularization theory became the ideological framework for sociologists of religion. In both cases, Pentecostalism and its variant forms would play important roles in the downfall of both church-sect and secularization theories. In the next chapter Weber's *Protestant Ethic* and

its new-found relationship with Pentecostalism, through the efforts of Peter Berger, will be discussed to complete the general hypothesis of this dissertation. Because of the influential role of Peter Berger explored in the next chapter, special attention is given to Berger's work here in order to give a more complete analysis of the processes to be discussed in the next chapter.

Origins and Meanings of Secularization

For centuries, intellectuals and academics of various types have been forecasting the death of religion. As early as 1710, the Englishman Thomas Woolston predicted the demise of Christianity to be inevitable before the start of the twentieth century (Stark 1999: 249). Since Woolston's prediction, many other public figures have likewise written about religion's impending doom, including Frederick the Great, Voltaire, Auguste Comte, and Thomas Jefferson. Theorists of religion, such as Frederick Engels, Max Müller, and even Max Weber, likewise decreed that religion was fated to fade as the world embraced a secular modernity (Stark 1999: 249-250).

Secularization had often been associated with processes of modernization, specifically as a component of it. Jeffrey Hadden referred to modernization as "*the* master model of sociological inquiry" (1987: 588). Theories of modernization gave birth to other "-izations" (for example, industrialization, bureaucratization, rationalization, urbanization, etc.) which became part and parcel of the modernization process. Some of these components were essential to modernization, others preferable, and still others inevitable.

Secularization was understood as an inevitable component of modernization, and remained as a mainstay in sociological theory even in the absence of supportive data. Despite being taken for granted amongst sociologists of religion, it was not always agreed upon, or even always understood, what exactly the term meant. Stark (1999) proposes that secularization was generally understood, and generally expected, as the decline in individual piety and personal religious belief (which would naturally have a secularizing effect on societies). The introduction of alternative definitions of secularization into the discussion, according to Stark, "permits some proponents of the thesis to shift definitions as needed in order to escape inconvenient facts" (1999: 251). By 1967, the theologian

Larry Shiner had identified so many working definitions of secularization that he could classify them into six different categories: 1) decline of religion; 2) conformity with “this world”; 3) disengagement of society from religion; 4) transposition of religious beliefs and institutions; 5) desacralization of the world;¹² 6) movement from a “sacred” to a “secular” society (Shiner 1967).

As previously noted, the concept of secularization is much older than Max Weber, and at least as much as two centuries before the publication of Weber’s *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*¹³ (1922), it was not an altogether uncommon belief among intellectuals that religion had no future in the modern world. It should also be noted that the focus of this chapter is on secularization theory, distinguished from recent studies regarding the secular and secularisms. These discussions (see for example Jakobsen and Pelligrini’s *Secularisms* [2008], and Cady and Hurd’s *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age* [2010]) are highly nuanced and deal with the complexities surrounding sacred/secular spaces in an ever-changing world. While intrinsically related to processes of secularization, it is beyond the scope of this project.

Max Weber and Secularization

One would be hard pressed to extrapolate a theory of secularization from the works of Max Weber alone. Despite what his interpreters would declare in his name, his work rarely made prescriptive or prophetic declarations, but rather tended to focus on solving specific sociological quandaries. Perhaps his most famous declaration is found in *The Protestant Ethic* when he describes the effect of modernity as an “iron cage” (or “shell as hard as steel”), but even here Weber is careful not to make hard and fast predictions. He says:

No one knows who will live in this cage in the future or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or if neither, mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. (Weber 1958: 182).

¹²In Shiner’s explanation of the fifth concept he includes Weber’s concept of “disenchantment” (*Entzauberung*) with the world caused by processes of rationalization.

¹³*Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religion* (own translation)

Harvey Cox explains how *The Protestant Ethic* was influential in furthering the secularization thesis: “Max Weber initiated the discussion by suggesting that although Calvinism had provided the original value foundations for modernity the religious substance was being displaced by the very worldview it had spawned” (Cox & Swyngedouw 2000: 4). Essentially, all of the tools to support the secularization thesis are found in Weber’s work, particularly Weber’s obsession with processes of rationalization. While implicit in *The Protestant Ethic*, it is understood that the rational discipline required of the Calvinist was intrinsically tied to modernization, scientific discovery, maximizing efficiency, and cultivating a rationalistic approach to all areas of life; all of these were thought to work against religious institutional power and religious belief. It is in this sense that Cox declares “this revolution was devouring not its children but its parents” (Cox & Swyngedouw 2000: 4).

Though this seems to be largely where theorists derive the strongest Weberian case for secularization, Weber’s most quoted phrase with regard to secularization is undoubtedly “the disenchantment of the world” (*Entzauberung der Welt*), which Weber used to describe “the fate of our times” (Weber 1922). Clearly Weber saw this disenchantment, sometimes translated as “de-magification,” as the direct results of processes of rationalization. We can therefore confidently conclude that Weber had believed that secularization was an inevitable by-product of modernization; however, a theory of secularization is far from established in any of Weber’s work. Hence, this lone quote and inference are all that can be used from Weber’s work when discussing secularization theory. Likewise, it would be inaccurate to call Weber the innovator of a theory of secularization. We can only say that Max Weber, like many others before and after him, expected to see religion and magic play a decreasing role in social life.

The Rise of Secularization Theory

Jeffrey Hadden famously exposed secularization theory’s elevated, and undeserved, status in his presidential address at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society in 1986, “Toward Desacralizing Secularization Theory.” He argued,

...secularization theory has not been subjected to systematic scrutiny because it is a *doctrine* more than it is a theory. Its moorings are located in presuppositions that have gone unexamined because they represent a taken-for-granted ideology rather than a systematic set of interrelated propositions. (Hadden 1987: 588)

Hadden's insight into the trajectory of secularization theory resembles, quite remarkably, the trajectory of church-sect theory. In fact, on closer comparison there are many other similarities between the life and death of both church-sect theory and secularization theory.

The similarities between the trajectories of church-sect theory and secularization theory have been noted by William Swatos, Jr. and Kevin Christiano in their 1999 article, "Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept." They note that both the terms "church-sect" and "secularization" were introduced by Max Weber, but did not appear significantly in American sociology until the late 1950s (1999: 209). The comparison culminates in the question "is 'secularization' an analytic tool or a value judgment?"—suggesting that the same question was applied to the terms "church-sect" and resolutely determined to be the latter (Swatos and Christiano 1999: 211). Though the principle terms in both theories can be traced back to Max Weber, as we have seen with church-sect theory (and will shortly learn about secularization theory), we should not assume a pure Weberian heritage. In the next chapter I will propose there is a third theory that, like church-sect theory and secularization theory, shares a pseudo-Weberian heritage, enjoys a taken-for-granted status, and is currently being applied with ease to, not surprisingly, Pentecostals. I am referring, of course, to the concept of the Protestant ethic as it presents itself in the twenty-first century. Interestingly, all three of these cases (secularization theory, church-sect theory, and a Protestant work ethic) have roots tracing back to Max Weber, yet reach their apex (or achieve a status nearing ideology) in a form that is almost unrecognizable as Weberian in origin. Furthermore, in the first two cases Pentecostalism featured in an unexpectedly important role as the theories approached their demise. With regard to the recent application of *The Protestant Ethic* to development economic models, Pentecostalism is again at the center of analysis. This is the topic for the next chapter, so I will not go into further detail here.

Secularization at times became a topic of public interest. Peter Berger reported to the *New York Times* in 1968, “by the 21st century, religious believers are likely to be found only in small sects, huddled together to resist a worldwide secular culture” (in Stark 1999: 250). The lucid interpreter of social processes, Berger became the public face of secularization theory. Stark describes Berger as “the most sophisticated modern proponent of the secularization thesis” (1999: 252). However, there were others who rose to prominence due to their work on secularization. David Martin’s *A General Theory of Secularization* (1978) illustrated that despite its reputation as a simple concept, secularization was immensely complex and varied. Though Martin outlines general patterns of secularization, the complexity and multiplicity of variables involved require tedious analysis, making for a difficult read for the layperson. However, this illustrates precisely why, despite centuries of general acceptance, a theory of secularization has never been comprehensively composed.

Another important figure connected to secularization theory was the theologian, Harvey Cox. Through his book, *The Secular City* (1966), Cox gives a novel theological perspective to secularization. Though secularization had for decades reigned as the number one enemy of theologians, clergy, and dedicated religious followers (particularly Evangelicals), Cox presents secularization as liberating spirituality from religious order, predicting that paradigms of secularization will promote new, inspired ways of thinking about the sacred.

Peter Berger’s Sacred Canopy

The Sacred Canopy (1967) is a continuation of Peter Berger’s previous work on *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) with Thomas Luckmann. *The Sacred Canopy* seeks to extend the concepts introduced in *The Social Construction of Reality* to their natural implications, particularly with regard to religion. In so doing, Berger reminds the reader of these pertinent concepts and then proceeds to discuss the topic of secularization. Berger’s task is to articulate a “dialectic understanding” between man and society which synthesizes both Weberian and Durkheimian views. While Weber placed emphasis on human signification as continually constructing social reality, Durkheim’s view placed society in an antagonistic relationship with the individual. While these views appear

contradictory to each other, Berger believes that both are correct, but only correct when properly synthesized together to illustrate the dialectic relationship between the individual and society. In other words, we must understand that individuals contribute to building a social reality, yet are simultaneously molded by this very same social reality. Berger believes that though Talcott Parsons attempted to create such a synthesis, it failed to retain the primary intentions of both Weber and Durkheim, and in so doing, is inherently flawed. By working in this dialectical framework Berger pushes the traditional boundaries offered by the functionalist school championed by Parsons. Though Berger posits religion according to its various functions, he follows Luckmann by distinguishing between functionality and structural-functionalism as a quasi-ideology (see Berger 1967: 176). The dialectic between humans and their society is presented as a multilayered web of causalities, and religion supports this dialectic in much the same way language supports communication. To be sure, Berger is not setting out to redefine religion,¹⁴ but rather situate it in relationship to the process of “world-building.”

Berger sets about his task of articulating this dialectic that remains true to Weberian subjectivity and Durkheimian objectivity. He describes this dialectic as a process, which can be illustrated through three moments, or steps.

Externalization is the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the physical and the mental activity of men. Objectivation is the attainment by the products of this activity (again both physical and mental) of a reality that confronts its original producers as a facticity external to and other than themselves. Internalization is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from structures of the objective world into structures of the subjective consciousness. (1967: 4)

The three steps in the dialectic process each play a crucial role in maintaining the flow of influence or “world-building,” and allow both society and the individual to be products of each other (1967: 3-4). These roles are elaborated as Berger declares, “It is through

¹⁴ Berger draws largely on the definition of religion put forth by Thomas Luckmann in his *The Invisible Religion* (1967) (Originally published in German as *Das Problem der Religion in der modernen Gesellschaft* [1963]), which is consistent with the Durkheimian tradition. For more on Berger’s use of sociological definitions of religion, see Berger, 1967: 175-177.

externalization that society is a human product. It is through objectivation that society becomes a reality *sui generis*. It is through internalization that man is a product of society” (1967: 4).

There are many implications to this dialectic process, and it is not necessary to review them all here. It is worthy to note the important role of religion in this dialectic, as it has historically played the legitimating role to the social order. Berger illustrates how religion is ideally suited to play this role, but notes that there could be alternative legitimating structures were religion to fade away from society through processes of secularization. Berger demonstrates the objectivity of society (though subjectively created) through a variety of illustrations. One such illustration of how this dialectic is realized in society is through the existence of language. Whereas any language (Berger uses English as an example) is arbitrarily constructed by individuals, it exists as an objective reality that imposes its rules on its speakers. Though the English language is entirely dependent upon individuals ascribing to it as a means of communication, and changes only as a result of human contribution and alteration, its objectivity is never in question when the individual is met with its constraints (1967: 11-12). This can serve as an analogy to society, which is likewise subjectively created by individuals, but simultaneously exists objectively and imposes its rules and constraints on its members. “The objectivity of society extends to all its constituent elements. Institutions, roles, and identities exist as objectively real phenomena in the social world, though they and this world are at the same time nothing but human productions” (1967: 13).

This is the great irony of human society: that we create our worlds and are subsequently imprisoned by them, even created by them. But because society (a substructure of culture) is an imaginary system, it is inherently unstable and requires legitimation. Greater stability for the social order, or “nomos,” is achieved when the social order is perceived to be morally correct, though the greatest stability is achieved when the nomos is taken for granted, that is, understood as inevitable or a part of natural processes (Berger 1967: 24). Religion provides the legitimating role for social order, exemplifying the “farthest reach for man’s self-externalization, of his infusion of reality with his own meanings” (1967: 27-28). This is acted out through the human construction of the sacred, and by extension, the profane. However, Berger notes that while “profane”

is represented as the antonym of “sacred,” there is a much deeper, and more threatening, opposing construction: chaos. The individual’s pursuit of aligning oneself into a proper relationship with the sacred (which we may call religion) is his/her attempt to guard against the terrors of chaos. Religion therefore legitimates the social order and protects humans against the fearful thought of an order-less existence, while integrating “those marginal situations in which the reality of everyday life is put in question” into the sacred order (1967: 42).

Processes of Secularization

Secularization is defined by Berger as “the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from domination of religious institutions and symbols” (1967: 107). Though his definition refers specifically to the public presence of religion in society, he clarifies by saying “as there is a secularization of society and culture, so there is a secularization of the consciousness” (1967: 107-108). Therefore we can see that Berger’s understanding of secularization is a comprehensive one.

Generally speaking, Berger presents the secularization theory as might be expected. It is heavily rooted in Weberian references and labels the “capitalist-industrial economy” as the original source from which secularizing forces come into being (1967: 109). He also demonstrates the close relationship between Christianity and the modern capitalist-industrial economy in the fashion of *The Protestant Ethic*. Berger suggests that “the Western religious tradition may have carried the seeds of secularization within itself,” and consequently concludes that “Christianity has been its own gravedigger” (1967: 110, 129).

However, Berger’s contribution to secularization theory is more profound than the standard formula. Specifically, he proposed the secularizing effects of globalization through the creation of increasingly pluralistic societies. Berger states, “Modernity has plunged religion into a very specific crisis, characterized by secularity, to be sure, but characterized more importantly by pluralism” (Berger 1979: xi). His argument is that with multiple religious influences in a given society “religion can no longer be imposed but must be marketed” (1967: 145). With religious contents acting as commodities and religious institutions subjected to economic models of competition, Berger contends that

standardization and differential marginalization are inevitable outcomes among competing religious groups. In addition, the market model makes the consumer aware of multiple plausibility structures. In other words, pluralism forces the religious believer to recognize that their sacred reality is subjective, whereas in societies dominated by a single religious structure, adherents accepted “the” objective sacred reality (1967: 151).

Ironically, as secularization theory began to receive criticism, Berger’s market model of religion would be adopted by many seeking an alternative conceptualization of religion in modernity, albeit with the opposite conclusions presented by Berger. In 1988, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark published a theory of religious economies in their co-authored work, “Religious Economies and Sacred Canopies.” In it, Finke and Stark propose an alternative to understanding how religion functions in a modern, globalized world, using Berger’s market model analogy. They frankly admit, “We agree with Berger that pluralism forces religions to compete for adherents. Unlike Berger, however, we view competition as a stimulus for religious growth and not an avenue for its demise” (Finke and Stark 1988: 42). This was significant for the sociology of religion, if for no other reason than to offer an alternative to thinking about contemporary religion outside the paradigm of secularization, which loomed over all sociological inquiry into religion previously. Religion and Economics has since developed into a burgeoning subfield of study, with continuous developments and innovative ways of incorporating a market-based approach to contemporary religious phenomena. Though Berger has since recanted his faith in secularization, the seeds of an alternative to secularization paradigms were buried in his eloquent analogy of secularizing forces.

From Pentecost to Charismata

The beginnings of the Charismatic Revival¹⁵ are often credited to the Episcopalian priest, Dennis Bennett, who announced to his congregation in Van Nuys, California in 1960 that he had received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The event, undoubtedly unexpected if not controversial, appears to represent the beginnings of the Charismatic Revival on a symbolic plane rather than a literal one. The true beginnings of the Charismatic Revival are not as exact. Other mass eruptions of charismata that predate Bennett’s confession

¹⁵ Sometimes referred to as Charismatic Renewal Movement, or Neo-Pentecostalism

have been documented in Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Scandinavia (Anderson 2004: 144-155). The post-war Healing Revival began to lose steam in the late 1950s, but had by no means come to an end. Healing evangelists were still active and many of them were directly involved in the Charismatic Revival. The event in Van Nuys was not overly responsible for sustaining or spreading the Charismatic movement, but it does stand as a typical example of what was happening as the Charismatic Revival took shape. By 1967, the revival had significant followings from all major Christian denominations, including Catholicism (Harrell 1975: 227).

The Charismatic Revival is generally characterized as an extension of the Pentecostal movement that began in the early twentieth century. The name “second wave” has been occasionally applied to the revival, the first wave being that which was experienced at Azusa Street and beyond in the first decade of the twentieth century. There is good reason for grouping the Charismatic Revival within the Pentecostal rubric. Firstly, the theological mechanisms to which Charismatics subscribed were the very same which set early Pentecostals apart, namely, the baptism of the Holy Spirit manifested through glossolalia, prophecy, divine healing, and so on. Like the participants of the Healing revivals, and even to a greater extent than early Pentecostals, Charismatics were experiencing the Holy Spirit beyond denominational barriers and constraints, promoting ecumenicalism through shared experience. They also shared a generally conservative disposition with regard to morality and politics, which became increasingly prevalent among Pentecostals after Azusa Street. This can be seen in Margaret Poloma’s definition of charismatics as: “Christians who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, but who also emphasize the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior” (Poloma 1982, cited in Coleman 2000: 22). This articulates the common ground between Pentecostals and Charismatics, while emphasizing that being either does not exclude one from being Evangelical.

Yet, the Charismatic Revival was populated, by and large, by non-Pentecostals and consequently cannot be seamlessly integrated into the Pentecostal tradition without clarification. As Stephen Hunt has noted, “there were sufficient departures from older expressions of Pentecostalism to suggest that the Charismatic movement was a unique religious manifestation in its own right” (Hunt 2010: 184). Unlike early Pentecostals,

Charismatic Christians came, by and large, from the middle-class (Hunt 2003: 79). This confounded psychological and social deprivation theories that easily explained Pentecostal expression as a result of a lack of education and frustrations from a low standard of living. Furthermore, classical Pentecostalism (as it came to be known after the Charismatic Revival) had become institutionalized through various denominations with significantly differing doctrines. The Healing revivals had, in some ways, represented a reaction to the institutionalization of Pentecostalism and in this way served as a precursor to the Charismatic Revival. Still, the Charismatic Revival would eclipse the scope of the Healing revivals by accepting many doctrines in addition to divine healing. “Some ministers emphasized healing, others demonology, or speaking in tongues, or prosperity, or prophecy” (Harrell 1975: 137).

The beginnings of Pentecostalism have often been called “amorphous” due to the numerous denominations that sprung up and were often divided among this or that doctrine. Yet, as amorphous as that early period was, the Charismatic Revival was more so. David Harrell describes the movement away from denominations altogether as a time when “the amorphous revival was united only by history and by the independent ministers who, free from denominational restraint, roamed the entire movement, speaking to any who would receive their message” (1975: 137). Yet despite the nebulous organization, the Charismatic Revival radically altered both Pentecostalism and Christianity through innovations in ministry and theology.

Charismatics in the Media and Public Imagination

Possibly one of the biggest contributions to the success of the Charismatic Revival was the shifting trends in popular media coverage of religion with the onset of the Cold War. Sean McCloud (2004) has researched and analyzed these trends, noting that through the 1950s, the waning years of the healing revivals, popular media “sustained the stereotype Pentecostalism was related to, or could lead to ‘physical and mental illness,’ and in some cases recommended that religious enthusiasm, emotion, zeal, and dogma be bridled “for the sake of bodily health” (McCloud 2004: 38). In 1958 *Time* magazine ran a story in which accused the healing missions of “a concentration on the individual healer rather than on God as the source of wholeness” (in McCloud 2004: 41). Generally we can see

that Pentecostals were consistently portrayed as “overly emotional and intellectually weak” (McCloud 2004: 43). Portrayals such as these in the media effectively created and sustained the notion of “fringe” religious movements, and at times equated being on the fringe of the American religious landscape with being un-American entirely (McCloud 2004: 3).

However, the Cold War consensus ideology which sustained this homogenous American identity faded, and “yielded to a growing recognition of the cultural diversity spurred by the civil rights and youth counter-culture movements” (McCloud 2004: 4). Increasingly pluralism and difference “became a significant, and widely accepted, part of public discourse” (2004: 6). This stirred a shift in media coverage away from the working-class and minority religious movements, such as Pentecostalism and the Nation of Islam. The media became obsessed with the occult, small religious groups that held bizarre religious beliefs and attracted their followers through hypnosis and/or brainwashing. McCloud describes this process saying, “By the mid-1970s, journalistic images of the fringe had darkened. Magazines like *Newsweek*, *McCall’s*, and *Reader’s Digest* promoted an image of a growing cult menace by highlighting the dangers that dictatorial leaders of fringe groups posed to the unsuspecting “mainstream” through brainwashing and coercion” (McCloud 2004: 4). The effects can be clearly understood as favorable to the Charismatic Revival. By the time a significant Charismatic presence could be witnessed in America, the media had found that sensibilities had changed in such ways that Pentecostalism and the new Charismatic Revival represented part of the increasingly accepted plurality of the American religious landscape.

However, this does not mean that Pentecostals and Charismatics were now considered “mainstream,” rather only that the popular media had found more shocking portrayals of the religious fringe. In some cases, the media went further and portrayed such groups beyond the religious fringe, beyond humanity. Events such as the mass-suicide at the People’s Temple Agricultural Project, led by Jim Jones, in Guyana in 1978, had captivated and horrified the public imagination. David Chidester has noted that the popular media, in coming to terms with the tragedy at the People’s Temple, created a new space for the religious other which necessarily “sacrifice[ed] any sense of the humanity of Jim Jones, the members of the Peoples Temple, and the residents of Jonestown”

(Chidester 1988: 1). The public imagination had been introduced to a new religious sphere, occupied by “monsters” rather than people (Chidester 1988: 1). As the corpses of those who had followed Jim Jones arrived in Delaware shortly after the massacre, the lifeless bodies evoked fear in people. This is described by Chidester, saying “the presence of the Jonestown dead within the sacred space of American society disturbed the sense of spatial orientation that animated this invisible religious worldview” (1988: 20). This disturbance had effectively “defied the fundamental classification of what it is to be a human being in this invisible religion” (Chidester 1988: 20). Pentecostalism and other working classes had been portrayed in the media as “un-American,” but Jim Jones and his followers were not only un-American, but also unhuman.

The emergence of the religious ‘other,’ which was inhumanly other, failed to push Pentecostalism and Charismatic Christianity into the mainstream, however it did require a reclassification and reorganization of the religious landscape in the public imagination. In this context Pentecostalism still occupied a “fringe” religion, though the public was now aware of a more threatening religious other. McCloud notes that even into the 1990s Pentecostals and Charismatics, despite composing a sizable portion of the American population, were dismissed by journalists as “culturally peripheral” (2004: 171).

Oral Roberts Reaches New Heights

The Healing revivals drew many, but not all, of its evangelists from the Pentecostal tradition. The Charismatic Revival would have even fewer ties with Pentecostalism, with many evangelists coming from (and several remaining) in mainline denominations. Of the Healing Revival evangelists, Oral Roberts was one of the few that had gained enough of a base to support his ministry into the time of the Charismatic Revivals. More than this, Oral Roberts was exceedingly aware of the challenges that faced the Healing revivals and the opportunities that awaited with the Charismatic Revival. Harrell writes, “No man measured the pulse of the emerging charismatic revival more astutely than Oral Roberts” (1975: 150). Roberts believed in establishing a multi-dimensional ministry that did not rely solely on healing evangelism. It was this planning that led to the establishment of Oral Roberts University, which became the personal focus of Roberts during the sixties (1975: 153-155). Despite the advice of friends, Roberts channeled his

ministry's money toward building up ORU into a state-of-the-art university. By 1972, ORU had received national accreditation and had cost more than fifty-five million dollars (1975: 155).

In a daring move, Roberts cut ties with the Pentecostal denominations by joining the Boston Avenue Methodist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1968 (1975: 152). The move, which Roberts claimed was directed by God, demonstrated Roberts' keen eye as to where his future constituency lay. The gifts of the Spirit were being experienced in thousands of mainline churches, just like the Boston Avenue Methodist Church, across the country, and Roberts saw the potential for the growth of his ministry among the Neo-Pentecostals.

Shortly after his move to Boston Avenue Methodist Church, Roberts reinvested in television by launching a series of specials aimed to attract a large audience. Entertainers such as Roy Rogers, Pat Boone, and Jimmy Durante made appearance on the prime time specials (1975: 155). The program successfully attracted over 300,000 new members to the ministry's mailing list within a few months of airing. By adopting new technologies and entering new mediums to transmit his message, Oral Roberts quickly became a celebrity among Christian evangelists. As Roberts aged and his fame grew his message became more inclusive. Though he never abandoned the belief in faith healing, it featured much less in the sixties and seventies. With a more mainstream message, Roberts attracted many more followers who were interested in a charismatic style of Christianity. Roberts' ability to adapt clearly benefited his multi-faceted ministry. By 1974, the estimated yearly costs for maintaining the expansive ministry were estimated at \$15,000,000 (Harrell 1975: 158).

Roberts was particularly good at raising funds to support his ministry. Small individual donations from supporters constituted a significant portion of the ministry's finances. This was motivated, at least in part, by a theological innovation pushed by Roberts, that is, the principle of seed-faith. Seed-faith emphasizes monetary donations to demonstrate one's faith. Such faith is then expected to enact a miraculous monetary blessing from God as reward for his/her faith. This logic was taught and emphasized by Roberts and became the basis for what would later be called "prosperity gospel." Roberts was not alone in asking for funds through seed-faith logic. Others such as Kenneth Hagin

and Kenneth Copeland, who were closely connected to Roberts and his ministry, also established successful, long-lasting ministries on this logic.

William Branham

As discussed in the previous chapter, William Branham became an immensely popular figure during the Healing revivals after World War II. His ministry, unlike that of Oral Roberts, suffered from poor organization and consequently waned into relative obscurity in the years preceding Branham's death. In addition to the lack of organization and good management of finances, Branham's ministry became embroiled with controversies in the sixties. The controversies that nudged William Branham's ministry to decline reveal the changing attitudes among Pentecostals and the new Charismatics. Branham was reluctant, and perhaps unable, to adapt his message to a 1960s audience. No longer under the spell of a post-war craving for the miraculous, the neo-Pentecostals of the sixties now found the displays of divine healing to be old news. While Oral Roberts was expanding to gain new followers by reaching out to mainline denominations, Branham's ministry was unable to penetrate that same realm, despite the apparent craze for Charismatic gifts among Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and others. Branham's adamant and sincere plea was that his ministry was ecumenical. Yet, those loyal followers of Branham became increasingly devout as Branham's message became increasingly rigid with respect to morality, as well as bizarre, through complicated prophetic visions (Harrell 1975: 163). He opposed women wearing pants or short hair-cuts, and believed women should not take up the role of preaching, in a decade that made significant gains in women's rights and altering the traditional expectations of women (1975: 163). He also accepted the controversial Oneness theology toward the end of his career, a theology that denied the existence of the trinity and placed emphasis on baptism by water in the name of Jesus alone (rather than the traditional "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost") (see Weaver 2000). Those that remained faithful to Branham's message, even after his death, continued to print his sermons and spread his ecumenical message, though even these became divided over various doctrinal issues. Even today there remains a sizable group of followers known as "message believers" (though sometimes referred to by others as Branhamites) (See Weaver 2000).

A comparison of Branham and Roberts provides interesting insight into the changing face of religion, demonstrating what was possible even without the endorsement of a well-funded, established denomination. And though these extraordinary men certainly displayed a high degree of charisma and determination, it is clear that longevity favored the prepared and organized Roberts over the force of personality that was known as William Branham. The preacher/orator would henceforth take a back seat to the preacher/CEO. As the latter, Roberts had given a proven blueprint on how to build a religious empire, and keep it.

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International

As the Healing Revival began to lose its mass appeal, evangelists quickly discovered the financial difficulties of establishing a ministry without denominational support. Oral Roberts was uniquely gifted at organizing support and raising funds, but other evangelists, such as William Branham, were halted in their efforts due to financial restraints. Most evangelists, such as Donald Gee, Gordon Lindsay, and others, explained the waning revival as a result of spiritual malfeasance, that is, lack of prayer or fasting, fraudulent ministers, or the reliance on gimmicks instead of the Holy Spirit (Harrell 1975: 138-139). The reality was that without structural support the movement was financially dependent on each rally, crusade, or tent meeting.

Many of these problems would be mitigated with the establishment of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI). The FGBMFI would grow to be a powerful organization and provide financial support to many ministries throughout the Charismatic Revival. Though the organization originally restricted membership to males, many chapters accepted female members. However, the worldwide organization continues to be dominated by male membership. With the support of the FGBMFI, ministries could logistically maneuver free from the influence of a particular denomination. Consequently, the Charismatic Revival overshadowed the Healing revivals and was not subject to the denominational allegiances and rivalries that severely handicapped the healing evangelists' desire for ecumenical cooperation.

The FGBMFI was fortunate to gain the early support of Oral Roberts, who was keenly aware of the benefits of an organization of laypersons that could generate

influential amounts of revenue, and that is precisely what it achieved. In 1972, the FGBMFI recorded more than 300,000 members and operated on an annual budget of \$1,000,000 (Harrell 1975: 147). It also came to symbolize the emerging wealth of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Harrell writes, “the fantastic growth of the fellowship marked the acceptance of charismatic religion by thousands of successful middle-class people” (1975: 148). However, the fellowship also served as a critique to classical Pentecostalism and the degree to which it had become institutionalized, serving as a “subtle rebellion against denominational authority” (1975: 147).

Prosperity Gospel

As noted earlier, Oral Roberts played a significant role in developing what is known today as “prosperity gospel,” through the theological mechanism he called “seed-faith.” Oral Roberts innovation was not particularly theological, as the history of Prosperity gospel goes back much further. Robert’s role was in systematizing and organizing the means and methods behind the monetization of this theology. Harrell notes that this message had been preached as early as the 1930s by Thomas Wyatt, who made that doctrine “the foundation of his ministry” (1975: 229). Coleman notes that evangelists as far back as Dwight Moody (1837-1839) preached an “Arminian gospel of wealth” that had appeal to “middle-class congregations who sought spiritual justifications for entrepreneurial attitudes” (2000: 41). The success of the seed-faith motif became apparent with Roberts’ use of the doctrine through his various media outlets (i.e. television, radio, publications) that allowed him to reach thousands more people with this doctrine, people who would possibly never have direct contact with Roberts, yet donated to his ministry. This was particularly significant as the Charismatic Revival took shape, with its middle-class constituency, and as the potential for financial support saw exponential growth. Taking advantage of this, Roberts packaged the seed-faith principle into a convenient, money- back guarantee, “Blessing Pact,” claiming that those who donated at least \$100 to his ministry would receive a full refund if the contributor did not receive compensation from a totally unexpected source (Coleman 2000: 41). Combined with specific testimonies telling of how donating money in faith resulted in an unexpected reward (be it through a job promotion, a refund check, or an elaborate gift),

the seed-faith logic became almost a necessity for starting an independent Charismatic ministry during the sixties and seventies.

Kenneth E. Hagin

As Roberts gained mainstream respectability and Oral Roberts University had demonstrated itself to be a successful investment, he made fewer appeals for funding. This has partly diminished his legacy's role in forming the prosperity gospel and shifted the spotlight to Kenneth Hagin. Born in Texas in 1917, Kenneth E. Hagin grew up in the Baptist faith until he experienced a miracle of healing that led him to believe in the power of faith to cure disease. Now a firm believer in faith healing, Hagin began preaching as a Pentecostal (Assemblies of God) in 1937. As Pentecostal denominations achieved greater institutional control, Hagin grew frustrated with the legalistic policies and restrictions from working with various independent healing evangelists (Coleman 2000: 29). Eventually he was forced out of the Assemblies of God, but it would be serendipitous timing because the Charismatic Revival had just begun to gain traction. Hagin therefore found a new audience for his Faith teachings, which had by this time expanded to include financial prosperity in addition to divine health (hence the unaffectionate term, "health and wealth gospel").

Through the sixties and seventies, Hagin established his Living Waters Church through which he delivered a radio sermon entitled "Faith Seminar of the Air," published a periodical entitled *Word of Faith*, and founded the Rhema Bible Training Center and Rhema Correspondence Bible School (Coleman 2000: 29). Though Hagin's ministry developed later than that of Roberts, and his message was not particularly unique at the time, his association with various forms of prosperity gospel is the strongest of the independent ministers of the Charismatic Revival. As it happens, the terms "Word of Faith" and "Faith" have grown to represent amiable labels for prosperity teachings, demonstrating the lasting impact of Hagin's ministry. Kenneth Hagin died in 2003, after which his son Kenneth W. Hagin became the successor to the expansive Rhema Ministries. The emphasis on faith-based giving and miraculous reward still remains the foundation of the ministry's message, though other Charismatic characteristics (such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, and ecstatic worship) have become less obvious, while a

general fundamentalist approach to scripture, Zionist disposition, and conservative political agenda feature increasingly.

Prevalence and Origins of Prosperity Teachings

Though often described as part of the Charismatic Revival, prosperity teachings played a central role in the revival. Writing in 1975, David Harrell claimed that the prosperity message had “almost supplanted the earlier emphasis on healing” and that “every evangelist came to advertise his own ‘master key to financial success’” (1975: 229). Prosperity through faith would become a controversial issue in later decades, causing the gaze of history to distinguish between a localized “Faith Movement” and the broader Charismatic Revival. While there were certainly those who did make the prosperity gospel the foundation of their ministry, it appears that the understanding of prosperity through faith was widespread. Many others established ministries upon prosperity principles during the seventies, some of which still thrive today operating on lucrative budgets. Kenneth Copeland was the former personal pilot and chauffeur of Oral Roberts before enrolling into ORU and establishing his own ministry on Faith principles. In 2007, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland were named by United States Senator Chuck Grassley, of the committee on finance, as one of six televangelistic ministries into which the committee would inquire regarding financial responsibility and accordance with federal tax-exempt status requirements. While the committee found no evidence of wrongdoing among “the Grassley Six,” the committee discovered enormous amounts of wealth at the disposal of Kenneth Copeland and his ministry, despite the ministry’s extraordinary efforts to maintain secrecy about finances.¹⁶

Other evangelists preaching the prosperity gospel have not fared as well under scrutiny. Jimmy Swaggart established a television ministry, in 1975, with seemingly limitless potential. In the same year, David Harrell wrote that Swaggart’s “appeal spread in all directions and his future seemed bright,” and that he was “determinedly ‘honest’ and ‘clean’” (1975: 215-216). This honest and clean image lasted only until 1988 when Swaggart was implicated in a sex scandal with a prostitute, and again in 1991. Swaggart’s

¹⁶ The senate committee’s findings are available to the public and can be accessed at www.grassley.senate.gov, last accessed 8 January 2012.

fate presents itself as lenient compared to that of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker, former evangelists and founders of the *PTL Club*. After accusations of financial impropriety and sexual abuse, Jim Bakker lost his ministry and eventually served five years in prison for various indictments of fraud. Many other figures became minor celebrities through prosperity teachings in the seventies and eighties, most of whom never became embroiled in scandals. At the time Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin were establishing their ministries using prosperity principles, it was not an especially controversial issue. Oral Roberts, however, did see the potential for controversy and consequently distanced himself from the Word of Faith movement. Thus, history would remember Hagin's faith "laws" as the founding principles behind the prosperity gospel and forget Roberts' "You Sow It, Then God Will Grow It" mantra (Brouwer et al. 1996: 24).

The controversy that has ensued over the prosperity message has led to debate over its origins. Some have traced the origins of the prosperity message to New Thought Metaphysics, which emerged as a popular pseudo-science in mid-nineteenth century due to the writings of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866). Quimby claimed to be able to cure disease through positive thinking, advocating that the mind can control, and even heal, the body given the right consciousness (Meyer 1966,). McConnell (1988) has traced the New Thought Metaphysics as it evolved into the prosperity gospel, believing the ideas were picked up by E.W. Kenyon (1867-1948) and eventually passed on to Kenneth Hagin. McConnell's genealogy of the prosperity gospel from New Thought Metaphysics is certainly plausible, though it is difficult to verify the transfer of ideas. The origins of prosperity gospel are particularly difficult to discern due to their controversial and theological nature. Proponents of the theology claim the inspiration to be God himself, through personal revelation, and that it has always existed in scripture, and thus they have an interest in disguising any human source from which they might have received the teachings. Concurrently, detractors of the movement have an interest in determining a human origin of the teachings and thereby uncovering it as profane. Coleman notes that McConnell is one such detractor and requires to establish the human origins of the prosperity gospel so that he "can then attempt to argue that the (from his perspective) heretical aspects of Faith teaching—its crude emphasis on prosperity, its conferral of complete power on the believer—have primarily 'cultic' rather than

Pentecostal or charismatic origins” (Coleman 2000: 46). This does not discount the whole of McConnell’s argument, but it certainly adds questions to the motivation guiding the research.

In any case, it seems difficult to establish such a straight line of inheritance from Quimby to Hagin, given that the essential tools to form a gospel of prosperity have existed for centuries, and it required no great leap of thinking to go from the theology of someone like Dwight Moody to that of Kenneth Hagin. That is to say, while these two figures are presented as near polar opposites, the greatest differences between the two can be found not in their theology, *per se*, but rather their overarching worldview and accommodation to the prevailing cultural characteristics of the day. Hunt has described the prosperity gospel as a fusion of “fundamentalism with elements of a materialistic culture” (2000: 333). This posits the prosperity message in a rather uninventive light theologically, attributing its chief characteristics and principle doctrines as “the cultural and ideological underpinnings of capitalism: the ethic of consumerism and the entrepreneurial spirit” (2000: 334). Hunt is looking at the prosperity gospel through a critical sociological lens, and is naturally critical of individual theological innovations independent of cultural influence. It is interesting to note that he describes the prosperity gospel as a perversion of Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic*. This link between Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* and the prosperity gospel will be explored more fully in the next chapter, and it is brought to the attention of the reader here to demonstrate the variety of interpretations *vis-à-vis* the origins of the prosperity gospel.

Conclusion

The trajectory of church-sect theory—from beginnings with Max Weber, to becoming an ideological force in the academy, only to fall from favor in relatively swift fashion—is paralleled by the trajectory of secularization theory. In Shiner’s (1967) early critique of secularization theory the parallels become clear. He states, “the appropriate conclusion to draw from the confusing connotations and the multitude of phenomena covered by the term secularization would seem to be that we drop the word entirely...” (Shiner 1967: 219). This echoes the early critiques of church-sect theory. As noted early on, church-sect theory suffered from a multiplicity of definitions, arising from increasing attention to

religious groups which defied existing categories in the church-sect paradigm. Benton Johnson (1957, 1961) provided a notable exception with his analysis of Pentecostals.

Pentecostalism, particularly the Charismatic Revival, likewise served as a stumbling block for secularization theorists. Not only had it reached notable popularity in the United States, but it drew attention to the increasing global presence of Pentecostalism, which was gaining a foothold in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Europe had also seen the increasing popularity of Pentecostalism, despite declining numbers of Catholics and mainline Protestants. The Charismatic Revival also brought several lasting innovations to Pentecostalism. With its affinity for media technologies, the Charismatic Revival sought to bring a modern image to Christianity. Stephen Hunt notes the impact on scholarly interest saying, “The pure scope of the movement stimulated a broader interest by way of its organizational dynamics and relationship to modernity” (Hunt 2010: 184-185). Eventually, scholars were forced to rethink their assumptions about the assumed trajectory of religion. Peter L. Berger, the champion of secularization theory, eventually recanted his position and publically admitted his error.

If I look back on my earlier work, I would say that I was wrong about secularization, but right about pluralism. I misunderstood the relation between the two: the latter does not necessarily lead to the former (*vide* the American case). What pluralism does (and there I was right) is to undermine all taken-for-granted certainties, in religion as in all other spheres of life. But it is possible to hold beliefs and to live by them even if they no longer hold the status of taken-for-granted verities. In other words, I would now say that pluralism affects the *how* of religious belief, but not necessarily the *what*. (Berger 2001: 194)

It became apparent that ministries could thrive even outside the denominational rubric, freeing pastors from the inherent restraints of hierarchal leadership. This would prove to be a vital characteristic facilitating the spread of Pentecostalism, allowing for localized leadership and thereby allowing for Pentecostalism’s heralded adaptability in foreign contexts. In the same way, this would promote diversity of theology, style of worship, practice of spiritual gifts, and so on. The resulting diversity is unmatched by any other

Christian group under one label. For this reason it is misleading to speak only of Pentecostalism, when there are many Pentecostalsisms.

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Chapter 5

Max Weber's Pentecostal Ethic for Development?

Introduction

At the end of the previous chapter it was noted that secularization theory had come under substantial attack in the late twentieth century. This was due in large part to the apparent disjunction between what the theory proposed was happening, and what was being seen throughout the world, namely, that religion was on the rise. This is most evident in developing countries, the so-called Third World, and it has been Pentecostalism that has taken center stage. The explosive growth of Pentecostalism in these parts of the world has led some scholars to call it “one more nail in the coffin of secularization theory” (Miller and Yamamori 2007: 37).

Pentecostalism has had quite a journey in the little more than a hundred years of its existence. This journey has crossed paths with the sociology of religion several times, as this thesis shows, often challenging the constructs built around it by sociologists. As scholars worked for decades to create a masterful theory to classify religious groups using Max Weber's ideal types (church-sect theory), Pentecostalism made a brief appearance to defy scholars' categories, leading many to abandon the theory altogether. Some scholars turned their energies to more promising ventures, such as developing a theory of secularization. It had been believed for centuries that modernization had already inserted the knife into religion and intellectuals were just waiting for faith to bleed out. After all, the father of sociology of religion, Max Weber, believed that secularization was inevitable. But just when a theory of secularization began to gather steam, Pentecostalism surges into the developing world, adding millions more to its ranks. Pentecostalism had again thwarted sociological theory and left many scholars wondering how this could have happened.

Recently, the paths of Pentecostalism and the ghost of Max Weber crossed again. Perhaps in a pre-emptive move, scholars have brought Weber's *Protestant Ethic* face to

face with Pentecostalism. Though traditionally sociologists have not portrayed Pentecostalism very positively, there has been a change in strategy. Sociologists are now looking at Pentecostalism as a positive force in economic development. This chapter examines the recent trend of applying Weber's *Protestant Ethic* to Pentecostalism. The largest and most expansive attempt to research Pentecostalism from this perspective comes from South Africa's Centre for Development and Enterprise, guided by Peter L. Berger of Boston University. Therefore this chapter will focus primarily on this study and the South African context. Conclusions will then be drawn about the viability of the current perspective on Pentecostalism.

Global Pentecostalism

The recent Pentecostal proliferation has sparked increased interest in the study of Pentecostalism from various aspects. The most obvious, yet possibly the most difficult, question posed has been, "Why has this happened?" To be sure, there is no easy answer. Some have referred back to deprivation theories used to describe early Pentecostal growth, believing that Pentecostalism distracted economically disadvantaged people from their difficult and depressing realities. This has, however, not been a popular route in recent years, as it is linked with racist and offensive ideologies that scholars of religion have worked hard to expel from their work. Furthermore, it does not account for the spectacular growth of neo-Pentecostal forms of Christianity among the middle classes. Others have called the Pentecostal explosion a reaction to modernity, another claim made about early Pentecostalism. However, close observations reveal Pentecostals to be remarkably uncritical of modernity, and they have even been described as embracing modernity. Among Christian ministers, Pentecostals stand out for their implementation of the latest technologies and audio/visual techniques to upgrade the religious experience for their followers. There seems to be no simple explanation for the rapid spread of Pentecostalism.

One characteristic of Pentecostalism that has become apparent in recent years is a remarkable ability to adapt to and change the environment in which it takes root. This certainly has facilitated the spread of Pentecostalism to areas that have been resistant to other forms of Christianity. Not surprisingly, this has resulted in many variations of

Pentecostal belief and practice. In fact, Pentecostalism now comes in so many different packages, it is difficult to find common characteristics that are all-encompassing. Allan Anderson (2010) recently acknowledged the problem of definition for scholars of religion, saying that Pentecostalism has become “as diverse as Christianity itself” (Anderson 2010: 14). In this context the term “Pentecostalism” has tended toward inclusivity, rather than exclusivity. Still, it is difficult to determine how many Pentecostals there are in the world today. David Martin estimated in 2002 that there were 250 million Pentecostals, but more recent estimates have reached as high as 500 to 600 million (see Anderson 2010).

Classical Pentecostalism, the form that traces its heritage to the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 and has since institutionalized into formal denominations, has experienced impressive growth, and likewise have those churches born during the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s and 1970s. Additionally, there have been thousands upon thousands of new independent churches that have some charismatic and Pentecostal tendencies, but have no ties to any Pentecostal network, do not carry the term “Pentecostal” or “Charismatic” on their billboard, and may even take exception to either label. This compounds the complexity and diversity of the movement exponentially. Allan Anderson poses the problem of defining Pentecostalism today by pointing out the variety of “Pentecostal” churches one encounters on a global scale:

[Pentecostalism] embraces churches as widely diverse as the celibacy-practicing Ceylon Pentecostal mission; the sabbatarian True Jesus Church in China, with a “oneness” theology; the enormous, uniform-wearing, ritualistic Zion Christian Church in southern Africa; and Brazil’s equally enormous and ritualistic, prosperity-oriented Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. These lumped together with the Assemblies of God, various Churches of God, the Catholic Charismatic movement, “neo-Charismatic” independent churches that espouse prosperity and “Word of Faith” theologies, the “Third Wave” evangelical movement, with its use of spiritual gifts framed within a theology that does not posit a subsequent experience of Spirit baptism, and many other forms of Charismatic Christianity as diverse as Christianity itself. (Anderson 2010: 14)

As one can easily see, Pentecostalism is hardly a homogenous field. We may already have reached the point to consider that the term creates more confusion than clarity. Of course, the problem of classification can be partly attributed to the rapidity with which it has evolved, but also we must consider the attempts of sociologists to retain such various movements under one banner to be a problem. As we shall see, these attempts, often employed to serve the interest of theory first, have ironically led to the undoing of the three theories discussed in this project (church-sect, secularization, Pentecostal ethic for development).

When studying Pentecostalism it is common to break it up into various taxonomic enclaves, though there is no consensus on exactly how this is done. Anderson's four types are representative of the most common taxonomies used today, though he stresses that these types are overlapping. He identifies Classical Pentecostals, Older Independent and Spirit Churches, Older Church Charismatics (including Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant Charismatics), and neo-Pentecostal and neo-Charismatic Churches (Anderson 2010: 16-19). Each subdivision has its own set of subdivisions. Classical Pentecostals would consist largely of established Pentecostal denominations originating in early twentieth-century America, usually associated with the Azusa Street Revival. Older Independent and Spirit Churches represent movements that resemble Pentecostalism, but developed independently of the Azusa Street Revival. Examples would include Zion churches in South Africa that originated with the work of Alexander Dowie in the early twentieth century, as well as similar movements that took shape in China and India. Older Church Charismatics refer specifically to churches that originated with the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s and 1970s, which have since attained a substantial global presence. Lastly, neo-Pentecostal and neo-Charismatic churches would include independent churches established since the 1970s that were influenced by classical Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Revival, though have no formal associations with either. Anderson places Prosperity Gospel churches in this final group.

The Protestant Ethic after Weber

It was not long before readers of Max Weber's *Die Protestantische Ethik unter der Geist des Kapitalismus* (1904-1905) began to verify a simplified version of the thesis in the

world around them. It justified the growing American economy, and easily explained why America surpassed European nations in wealth. It was used to explain the stagnating economies of predominantly Catholic Latin America. It has even recently been used to explain America's success and fanaticism with sports (see Overman 2011). Eventually, it seemed that Weber's Protestant ethic came to represent little more than "Protestantism = \$." Throughout the mid-twentieth century sociological research attempted to verify this simple formula, but could not find consistent results. By the late 1960s, sociologists were coming to the conclusion, "the Protestant ethic hypothesis is bankrupt" (Coleman 1968: 56). Of course, *The Protestant Ethic* never claimed much of what was tested, and Weber never recommended that his text on the historical relationship between Protestantism and capitalism be used as a model for contemporary analysis. But they were, nonetheless, and this caused much frustration for those who would not find similar results, eventually leading to the conclusion, and plea, that "The historical and cultural relativity of Weber's hypothesis is frankly admitted by those who call for a moratorium on its use" (Coleman 1968: 56).

Even those that tried to use Weber's Protestant ethic as a model historically had great difficulty matching Weber's results. Randall Stokes applied the model to early South Africa, settled by Dutch Calvinists, who became known as *Afrikaners*. Afrikaner Calvinism appeared theologically identical to the Calvinists studied by Weber, yet Stokes discovered that Afrikaner Calvinism actually impeded capitalist development and enterprise (Stokes 1975: 62). Stokes' article argued that to understand the secular impact of religion, one has to undertake a contextual focus on "operant religion," that is, religious belief "as it has been actualized within the actor's phenomenal world" (1975: 62). This definitively rendered Max Weber's Protestant ethic hypothesis useless in contemporary analysis by relegating it to a contextually specific occurrence.

The debate about how to use Weber's Protestant ethic picked up in the late 1990s, as economists and social scientists looked for solutions for problems of economic development in the so-called Third World. Robin Grier (1997) conducted a study of sixty-three former colonies and found that "...the growth rate of Protestantism is positively and significantly correlated with real GDP growth, and that the level of Protestantism is significantly related to real per capita income levels" (Grier 1997: 48).

However, this was cross-tested with many variables and it was found that “religion is not the sole determinant of differential development and growth” (1997: 48). There were several factors (including population growth, government consumption and inflation variables) that contributed to (or hindered) economic growth and development discovered by Grier, and religion depended upon a favorable constellation of all of these to provide the greatest impact on development.

Barro and McCleary (2003), in their global cross-country survey, found that an increase in church attendance over time was correlated to depressed economic growth, whereas an increase in religious belief (with static church attendance) was correlated with an increase in economic growth. It has been argued that religious networks, realized largely through church attendance, may generate social capital, which would in turn spur economic growth (CDE 2008a). While this theory has enjoyed much popularity in the last decade, Barro and McCleary’s work clearly negates the positive influence of church attendance on economic growth. They theorize that this is the case “because greater attendance signifies a larger use of resources by the religion sector” (2003: 779). However, though Barro and McCleary’s research shows a positive correlation between religious belief and economic growth, this should not be construed as evidence to support the application of Weber’s Protestant ethic in contemporary contexts, as Barro and McCleary’s research did not distinguish between various faith groups. In Noland’s survey of economic and religious data from India, Malaysia and Ghana determined that religious affiliation is indeed correlated with cross-country and within-country comparisons of performance; however, the data did not produce a “robust pattern of coefficients with respect to particular religions” (Noland 2005: 1227).

Despite the failure of recent research to demonstrate a clear link between religion and economic development, there has been a recent push to look at Pentecostalism, rather than Protestantism, as a contemporary equivalent to Weber’s Calvinists that spurred the capitalist revolution.

The Pentecostal Ethic in a Global Context

The investigation and subsequent link between contemporary Pentecostalism and Weber’s Protestant ethic really begins in 1985 at Boston University. In that year, Peter L.

Berger established the Institute on Culture and World Affairs (CURA) with two questions in mind: 1) Where can an equivalent of Weber's inner-worldly asceticism be found today? and 2) What is its relation to development? (Berger 2004).¹⁷ The research initially materialized into two focused projects, one led by Gordon Redding on overseas Chinese entrepreneurs that culminated in the book, *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism* (1990), and the other led by David Martin on Pentecostalism in Latin America that culminated in the book, *Tongues of Fire* (1990). In a speech given at Cornell University in 2004, entitled "Max Weber is Alive and Well, and Living in Guatemala: The Protestant Ethic Today," Berger elaborates on the connections between Pentecostals and Weber's Protestant ethic, drawing largely on the findings of Martin's work in Latin America. Berger presents a checklist of characteristics that constitutes Weber's ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. Though these characteristics are based solely on Weber's *The Protestant Ethic*, Weber's description is not as concise as Berger's summary, and therefore they are worth quoting here:

1. A disciplined attitude toward work (not just hard work, which one finds in many very un-Protestant places, but what Weber understood as the "rationalization" of work);
2. An equally disciplined attitude to other spheres of social life, notably the family (Weber's notion of "life-discipline");
3. A deferral of instant consumption, resulting in saving and, eventually, capital accumulation and social mobility (if you will, what psychologists call "delayed gratification");
4. And all of this in the context of a worldview at least relatively free of magic (Weber's "disenchantment of the world");
5. A strong interest in the education of children (originally based on the Protestant insistence that the Bible should be read by everyone);

¹⁷ Speech given at a conference entitled "The Norms, Beliefs, and Institutions of Capitalism: Celebrating Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*" in October 2004, hosted by the Center for the Study of Economy & Society (CSES) and funded by The John Templeton Foundation. Peter Berger's speech "Max Weber is Alive and Well, and Living in Guatemala: The Protestant Ethic Today" is made available online by the CSES and is available at http://www.economyandsociety.org/events/Berger_paper.pdf (last accessed on 21 January 2012).

6. And the propensity to create voluntary associations of non-elite people.
(Berger 2004)

Berger notes that the final two characteristics were not given much attention in Weber's work, though have grown to high levels of significance through the work of subsequent sociologists approaching history through a Weberian lens.

After presenting this checklist, Berger introduces the Pentecostal movement in Latin America as a new "ascetic" cultural movement in opposition to Catholic cultural norms. Principally, Pentecostalism encourages moral discipline through the proscription of alcohol and extra-marital sex. It encourages discipline with personal finances and discourages extravagant spending associated with *fiestas*, *quinciañeras*, and so on. Additionally, Berger argues, following Martin (1990), that Pentecostalism is "a culture that is radically opposed to classical *machismo*" and could be considered to be a "women's movement" (Berger 2004). Generally Berger affirms the correlation between Pentecostalism in Latin America and Weber's Protestant ethic, and more importantly, he confirms the effects of this correlation have shown increased social mobility and a growing Protestant middle class. However, he notes that there is a wide margin of diversity in Latin American Pentecostalism, and some strains may not be compatible with the Protestant ethic. He specifically refers to the Prosperity Gospel as "[deviating] from the Weberian concept" (Berger 2004).

Harvey Cox

Popularized by his theology of secularization in *The Secular City* (1966), Harvey Cox (like Peter Berger and David Martin) turned to the study of Pentecostalism when its inexplicable worldwide growth became the thorn in the side of secularization theories. Cox recognized that though secularization has not encompassed the world, the Pentecostal explosion did signify changes in the nature of religion, claiming that it served as "a useful x-ray, a way to understand the much larger mutation of religion of which it is an expression" (Cox & Swyngedouw 2000: 10). In his studies, Cox also found that despite many theological and cultural inconsistencies that arise in a comparison between Pentecostalism and the Puritans studied by Weber, Pentecostalism could "generate a

functional equivalent to the work ethic that makes them particularly well suited to certain features of modernization” (Cox et al., 2000: 5-6).

Cox, being a theologian, is less interested in sociological underpinnings and empirical conclusions with his observation, and is focused more on what the movement tells us about how faith adapts to processes of modernity. He has observed the organizational skills of Korean Pentecostals, which he surmises undoubtedly transfer as valuable occupational skills (Cox 1995). However, his analysis for the successes of Charismatic Christianity among educated-technical classes in France is not as easily accepted without empirical data.¹⁸

Miller and Yamamori

Donald Miller, professor of Religion and Executive Director of the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California, and Tetsunao Yamamori, President Emeritus of *Food for the Hungry International*, collaborated in 2007 to conduct research which led to the publication, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. They identify a new type of Pentecostalism which they call “Progressive Pentecostalism.” Emerging out of the 1990s, Progressive Pentecostalism is described as socially engaged and actively invested in its individual communities through charitable and “development-oriented” ministries (2007: 30). This is posited against orientations toward classical Pentecostal sectarianism and the emerging Prosperity Gospel, which Miller and Yamamori claim is the fastest growing movement within Pentecostalism (2007: 29). Through introducing the concept of the Progressive Pentecostal, the authors intend to break stereotypes about Pentecostals and demonstrate the world-affecting properties of the spirit-filled Christians. Additionally, they compile

¹⁸ Keeping with interpretations of Pentecostalism as a form of protest (See Anderson, Robert Mapes 1979. *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.), Cox observes: “In France, on the other hand, the charismatic movement (a milder form of Pentecostalism) has appeared within the educated-technical classes, a sector not usually considered ‘marginal.’ Why? Perhaps in part because these people must spend so much time immersed in the flat, homogeneous ‘language’ of the computer world. For them the charismatic practice of glossolalia (speaking in tongues) provides an alternative, emotionally rich but less denotative idiom for expressing human emotion. It could be a protest against the technological reduction of language” (Cox, Harvey and Jan Swyngedouw 2000. “The Myth of the Twentieth Century: The Rise and Fall of Secularization.” In *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. Vol. 27, No. ½. pp. 6).

testimonies and accounts from Pentecostals in a wide variety of locations to demonstrate that “there is a strong movement among some churches to explore development-oriented social ministries and in some cases even to pursue community organizing...” (2007: 48).

These individual, anecdotal accounts comprise the bulk of the book, though some theoretical navigating is required to reinforce their argument. Naturally, a comparison between Pentecostalism and Max Weber’s Protestant ethic is presented: “[Pentecostals’] code of ethics is very similar to that described by Max Weber” (2007: 164). However, Miller and Yamamori do not stop here, admitting that “it is too simple to cite only the obvious connections between the work ethic associated with capitalism and the personal ethic followed by Pentecostal converts” (2007: 171). Rather, they argue that a personal work ethic alone is insufficient, but that Pentecostalism carries a “constellation of factors” that work together to illuminate the interaction between religion and economics (2007: 171).

With respect to the Protestant ethic, however, it is believed by the authors that the “lifestyle of Pentecostals does not differ substantially from Weber’s description of the Puritans” (2007: 164). While attempting to classify Pentecostals according to Weber’s typology of inner/outer worldly asceticism/mysticism, the authors in the end classify Progressive Pentecostals as “Joyous Inner-Worldly Mystics who nevertheless practice a rather ascetic lifestyle,” and note that “Progressive Pentecostals benefit from the strengths of multiple strains within Weber’s typology” (2007: 173). In other words, Pentecostals have received the advantageous characteristics from all of Weber’s types. This is outlined in detail when describing Pentecostal ethics:

For Pentecostals, being a ‘new creature in Christ’ means that one does not drink alcohol, gamble, engage in illicit sex, or waste one’s time and money on frivolous activities. Stated positively, one is honest and transparent in all personal and business relations, one works diligently at whatever God commands one to do, one is a responsible parent and loving spouse and one acts compassionately toward all people, both within the Christian fold and outside of it, attempting to follow the example of Jesus....Pentecostal converts who are not wasting their money on alcohol, drugs, and partying now have surplus capital that they can invest into their businesses or the education of family members. Furthermore,

their businesses gain a reputation for honest transactions, and this in itself leads to a greater volume of exchange, since customers know that they will not be cheated. (2007: 164-5).

Through identifying these disciplines, Miller and Yamamori claim the basic consonance between Pentecostalism and the Protestant ethic. Essentially, it is argued that Pentecostalism “produces people who are honest, disciplined, transparent in their business dealings, people who view their vocation, humble or elevated, as a calling by God that warrants commitment” (2007: 165). The effect is increasing upwardly mobile Pentecostals in capitalist enterprise, though they note that “the goal of conversion is not financial; rather, financial gain is an *unintended* consequence of a changed life” (2007: 165).

In addition to the work ethic produced by Pentecostal conversion, Miller and Yamamori present seven associated factors that “strengthen the link between Pentecostalism and economic advancement” (2007: 169). 1) Pentecostalism gives the poor a renewed sense of “self-worth,” people that they identify as previously lacking confidence to “move up the economic ladder” (2007: 169). 2) Miller and Yamamori argue that the sense of community given to a new Pentecostal serves as a “safety net for individuals—especially in countries where government services are limited.” 3) The community, and by extension one’s sense of “group identity,” are enhanced through Pentecostal worship. The inference here is that because Pentecostal worship is remarkably expressive, the sense of community is realized to a greater degree compared with Christian groups with less ecstatic, less expressive means of worship. 4) Attention is drawn to Pentecostal social services and educational facilities that often serve as a superior infrastructure to existing governmental agencies, and are available exclusively to the Pentecostal community. 5) The practice of exorcism (casting out demons) and the filling of the Holy Spirit consolidates the number of spirits controlling their lives; “rather than being possessed by multiple spirits that pull them this way and that, they are subsequently guided by only one spirit—namely, the Holy Spirit” (2007: 170). This is claimed to give the formerly demon-possessed a greater sense of agency, as it “potentially contributes to upward mobility because it enables a person to be more goal-

oriented and less controlled by irrational forces” (2007:170). 6) Pentecostal evangelism teaches skills necessary to running an entrepreneurial business. However, it should be noted that the skills mentioned here appear to be associated with specific leadership roles, not laymen (i.e. organizational development, financial accounting, management, etc.). 7) Spiritual practices, such as fasting, all-night prayer, and “repressing libidinal urges” promote disciplines that transfer into a disciplined work life (2007: 171).

These claims are supported by exclusively individual accounts, success stories of people whose lives had been bettered through conversion to Pentecostalism. Therefore no statistical evidence can be produced to suggest that the categorization of “Progressive Pentecostalism” is warranted. Furthermore, the analysis of Pentecostalism’s affinity for market capitalism is oversimplified and, in some cases, stretched. For example, a more thorough investigation of how spiritual practices, such as all-night prayer, produce discipline that is readily available to the laborer would be welcomed. As is, many of the assertions about the financial benefits appear as speculation based on scant, anecdotal evidence. Elizabeth Brusco’s critique of the book also points to lack of depth behind the individual accounts presented by Miller and Yamamori, saying, “the case reports are somewhat shallow in nature, and occasionally read like fund-raising letters from an international aid charity” (Brusco 2009: 118). Additionally, the economic modalities are not clearly explained, and are assumed to be the same as seventeenth-century industrial Europe. This may be a simplification designed to garner the lay reader, though some insight into international economics would seem to be in order given the nature of the content. The reader has no real understanding of how widespread the “Progressive” form of Pentecostalism is, and of its relationship with other Pentecostal groups.

Marsh and Tonoyan (Russia and Ukraine)

Research on the impact of Pentecostalism in Russia and the Ukraine was carried out by Christopher Marsh and Artyom Tonoyan (with the support of Peter Berger and the Institute on Culture and World Affairs) and subsequently released in their 2009 publication, “The Civic, Economic, and Political Consequences of Pentecostalism in Russia and Ukraine.” Marsh is Professor of Political Science and Church-State Relations at Baylor University, and Artyom Tonoyan is a doctoral candidate in Religion, Politics

and Society, also at Baylor University. The majority of the article is devoted to giving the reader a brief history of the Pentecostal movement in Russia and Ukraine. They place their work in line with the recent works of Peter Berger, and Miller and Yamamori's work on "Progressive Pentecostals." Very little is devoted to discussing the actual findings of their research, which they admit are "still preliminary," though it is clear that they expect to find that Pentecostalism is playing vibrant civic, economic and political roles in the post-Soviet states (2009: 6). Particularly, they are looking to see if Pentecostalism will usher in greater "democracy, vibrant civil societies, and free markets in Russia and Ukraine" (2009: 7). Unfortunately, they produce virtually no evidence to suggest that it is doing, or will do, such things. Their data suggests that Pentecostals are not particularly politically efficacious and have below average rates of civic commitments.

The only positive data included in the article is a comparison between Orthodox Christians and Pentecostal/Charismatic responses to the question, "Is work important in your life?" The results showed that eighty-five percent of Pentecostals affirmed that work was indeed important in their lives, compared with only fifty-five percent among Orthodox Christians. This single piece of data is then used to facetiously affirm Weber's Protestant ethic, saying "so much for debunking the Weberian Protestant ethic thesis" (2009: 6). Additionally, they find that Pentecostals generally oppose free-market, neo-liberal capitalism, with tendencies favoring government intervention in the economy. There remains quite a gap between Weber's Protestant ethic thesis and a personal claim that work is important, but this is not addressed by the authors. Also unaddressed is the apparently significant immigrant Pentecostal population in Russia and Ukraine, and what impact this may or may not have on the aforementioned data.

Marsh and Tonoyan point to the potential for social capital in the Pentecostal movement, as a stimulus for economic growth, though simultaneously admit to divisions in the Russian and Ukrainian movements over the Prosperity Gospel, and frequently refer to negative stereotypes of Pentecostals that are commonplace among the larger population. Additionally, the numbers of Pentecostal adherents in Ukraine represent just three percent of the adult population, and "in Russia their presence is significantly less and they are more likely to be viewed as a cult..." (2009: 2). The authors admit that

“more research into the topic is still needed” and predicting the impact of Pentecostalism in Russia and Ukraine would, at this point, amount to nothing more than “speculation” (2009: 5-6). However, despite these concessions, the article overwhelmingly suggests the positive impact Pentecostalism is having in the respective countries. With so little data to present, and of this data there is nothing that even the authors could claim is conclusive, the article on post-Soviet Pentecostalism appears as little more than propaganda for a new burgeoning ideology in the sociology of religion that posits Pentecostalism as “progressive.” While this may appear to be a strong allegation, there are few alternative conclusions to draw from Marsh and Tonoyan’s article that tells us almost nothing about “The Civic, Economic, and Political Consequences of Pentecostalism in Russia and Ukraine” (2009).

Prosperity Gospel and the Protestant Ethic

In 2009, the popular Christian magazine, *Christianity Today*, began a conversation about Prosperity teachings and their global impact. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, the prominent Ghanaian professor of contemporary African Christianity and Pentecostal-Charismatic studies at Trinity Theological Seminary in Accra, Ghana, responded with a critical review of Prosperity Gospel and its impact in Ghana entitled, “Did Jesus Wear Designer Robes.”¹⁹ The article is substantiated with Asamoah-Gyadu’s firsthand experience as a Ghanaian Christian and his recognized status as an authority on African Charismatic Christianity. He explains the attractiveness of Prosperity teaching to Ghanaians as it “resonates with African religious ideas because of the traditional belief in mythical causality.” Therefore it is not absurd to ask for monetary donations and proclaim that through this act of faith, or “sowing,” God will miraculously bless the donor with riches. Asamoah-Gyadu shows how the movement neglects many traditional aspects of Christianity that deal with suffering, and replaces it with an image of success and riches. In this context, even Jesus is given the image of a successful and wealthy savior. His robes were “designer” because soldiers gambled to win them after his crucifixion; the ass that brought Jesus to Jerusalem is “reinvented in sermons as the Cadillac or Mercedes-Benz of the time.” As a theologian and Christian, Asamoah-Gyadu’s critiques emanate

¹⁹ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/globalconversation/november2009> (last accessed on 21 January 2012)

from his perception of a perversion of scripture and theology that amounts to little more than “sacralizing greed and covetousness,” and is likely to leave the poor in even deeper poverty (Asamoah-Gyadu 2009).

In response to Asamoah-Gyadu, Peter Berger continued the conversation with an article entitled, “Redeeming Prosperity,” also published by *Christianity Today* (2009).²⁰ Berger notes that Asamoah-Gyadu’s position has become “conventional” in mainstream Christian circles and among secular media and intellectuals. He introduces the reader to the current academic debate about the broader Pentecostal movement and its impact on economic and social development, positioning himself and David Martin on one side of the debate and Birgit Meyer and Paul Freston on the other. The question is about Pentecostalism’s role in processes of development and modernization, with Berger and Martin classifying Pentecostalism as playing a positive role in these processes, whereas Meyer and Freston see Pentecostalism as having a “retrograde influence, trapping its adherents in a passive acceptance of poverty.” Berger’s assessment of his opponents’ position may be too definitive, particularly when he claims that they relegate Pentecostalism to the same category as “cargo cults—a belief that the fruits of modernity will be delivered magically with no efforts demanded by the recipients.” As will be discussed later, Meyer does not go so far as to claim that Pentecostalism has a negative effect on economic development, and certainly does not posit Pentecostalism at complete odds with modernity. Rather, Meyer is concerned with the methodological underpinnings of the debate, particularly the problems associated with using Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* as a measuring stick for predicting economic growth, and draws on Colin Campbell’s *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Consumerism* (1987).

Interestingly, Berger refers to the large numbers and diversity of the Pentecostal movement to argue that both positions can find examples to support their viewpoint; however, he stresses (in italics) that “*adherents of the ‘prosperity gospel’ are a small minority within the mass of Pentecostals.*” This is a clear departure from his 2004 speech claiming that Prosperity forms of Pentecostalism “deviate from the Weberian concept.” Now, the lynchpin for Berger, irrespective of a Pentecostal’s acceptance of prosperity

²⁰ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/globalconversation/november2009/response2.html> (last accessed on 21 January 2012)

theology, is whether or not the group preaches virtues of “hard work, saving, giving up alcohol and sexual promiscuity, and so on.” He finds Pentecostals to follow such virtues, and in doing so, become the “contemporary reincarnation of the ‘Protestant Ethic’ made famous by Max Weber.” The consequence of a “morality of hard work, delayed gratification and planning for the future” is an improved economic condition and therein fulfills the promises of the Prosperity Gospel of increased wealth and success. For this reason Berger does not view the Prosperity Gospel as much of a threat to economic development as does Asamoah-Gyadu, though he does say that the basic message of the Prosperity Gospel, “if they have faith and express it by giving money to their church, prosperity will come by itself,” is indeed a false promise and that “those who make it are exploiters.” Berger concludes that for those who believe that Christianity does not favor poverty, a more nuanced view of the Prosperity Gospel will reveal it to be a “powerful vehicle for people to get out of poverty.”

In a previously published article in *Books and Culture: A Christian Review*, entitled, “You Can Do It! Two Cheers for the Prosperity Gospel” (2008),²¹ Peter Berger gives a similar positive review of the Prosperity Gospel in action. Here, he draws a comparison between the Prosperity Gospel and Liberation Theology, claiming that both share a “materialist distortion,” though whereas Liberation Theology tends to be anti-capitalist in orientation, Prosperity Gospel embraces a pro-capitalist ideology. He goes on to defend adherents of the Prosperity Gospel in an unusual way, and is worth quoting here:

People generally know what is good for them, better than the well-meaning outsider. So do buyers in the marketplace, especially if they are poor. Thus the ‘consumers’ of the prosperity gospel generally know what they are ‘buying.’ Specifically, they know that the betterment being promised them is not an illusion, and they know and don’t care that their preacher has a swimming pool and drives a Mercedes. If they put money in the collection plate, they generally believe that they are getting good value in return. Thus it is not only patronizing to see them as dupes and victims; it is empirically misleading. (Berger 2008)

²¹ Online edition can be accessed at <http://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2008/sep/oct/10.14.html> (last accessed on 21 January 2012).

Though it could be argued that Berger is writing here as a Christian for a lay Christian audience, and this view should not be misconstrued as sociological theory. Still, this is in complete contrast with the perspective of Asamoah-Gyadu (whom Berger would be unlikely to describe as “patronizing”) on Prosperity followers and the deception of Prosperity teachers. Furthermore, Berger’s argumentation implies that the message of the Prosperity Gospel is wrong (giving money in faith leads to miraculous wealth), but because of the lifestyle changes brought about by Pentecostal Christianity one can expect a betterment in one’s personal finances, which consequently (and inadvertently) fulfills the promises of the Prosperity Gospel. However, the above quoted paragraph completely displaces the “spiritual” logic preached by Prosperity teachers and implies a normative logic inherent within Berger’s market analogy. Much of Prosperity teachings revolve around letting go of “rational thinking” and “worldly logic” and replace these with “God’s laws,” which are superior to human thinking (see Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011). While Berger’s intentions are to describe Prosperity adherents as more rational than popular stereotypes have portrayed them, his argument largely concedes the irrational nature of the beliefs they hold, but expects this to be forgiven because the consequences of the lifestyle associated with these beliefs supposedly, and ironically, produces the results they are looking for.

An alternative, but still positive review of the Prosperity Gospel, can also be found in Miller and Yamamori’s (2007) aforementioned book. They argue that because the success advocated and expected is worldly rather than “pie-in-the-sky-in-the-sweet-by-and-by,” it may work to raise adherents’ expectations. Once expectations of a better life have been established, “it may be difficult to pacify them with off-the-shelf religious placebos” (2007: 31-32). They even invoke Marxist social theory to explain that the religious hope found in the Prosperity Gospel may incite political rebellion, or alternatively, if the hope of prosperity is left unfulfilled it may incite religious rebellion against the Prosperity churches, leading the disenchanted toward Progressive Pentecostal churches. More commonly, the Prosperity Gospel has been viewed as the creation of neo-liberal capitalist ideology. Joel Robbins says, “It is a kind of camera obscura portrait of neoliberal capitalism as it is experienced full force in the structurally adjusted cities of the

periphery of the global capitalist system—where some people get rich, but it is hard to figure out how or why, and where the vast majority of people are poor and becoming poorer” (Robbins 2010: 170).

Pentecostalism in South Africa

The spread of Pentecostalism and the wide-reaching influence of Pentecostalism on global Christianity create a significantly altered context that does not lend itself easily for comparison with other traditions or other eras of history. Unlike industrial Europe, which saw clear, and often bitter, divisions between Protestants and Catholics, Pentecostalism seems to have refused to draw the proverbial “line in the sand” between itself and other Christian denominations. It is precisely this trait that many have cited as the main cause for Pentecostalism’s wide-reaching success in gaining converts—for it is a faith that does not require conversion *per se*. One can remain Catholic but be “spirit-filled” and take part in divine healing crusades, or even speak in tongues (Csordas 1994). Pentecostalism’s “capacity for absorption,” to borrow a phrase from Harvey Cox, has created a movement so diverse that few characteristics can be universally applied, outside of recognizing the rapid rate at which it is expanding (Cox 1995: 222). However, this does not imply there are no tensions between Pentecostals and other church organizations (or between various Pentecostal organizations), only that these strained relations are not easily mapped and are not easily generalized.

A case could be made to argue that Pentecostalism arrived in South Africa before the Azusa Street Revival. In 1897, the Reverend J.U. Buchler, a South African Congregationalist minister, visited Alexander Dowie’s healing ministry in Zion City, Illinois, and was subsequently placed in charge of “African work” (Chidester 1992: 123). In 1902, Edgar Mahon, of the Salvation Army, began to work on Dowie’s behalf in the Orange Free State, and by 1904 a visit was made to Johannesburg by Daniel Bryant, one of the overseers of Dowie’s church in Zion City, Illinois, during which he baptized nearly thirty people (Chidester 1992: 123).

Though this is rarely considered the first “Pentecostal” visit to South Africa, it bore many semblances to the Pentecostal movement. In fact, the first South African Pentecostal missionary (to have ties to the Azusa Street Revival), John G. Lake, also had

ties to Alexander Dowie and considered his work in South Africa an extension of Dowie's (Robeck 2006: 277). John G. Lake first arrived in Cape Town in May of 1908 with his wife, Jenny, and their children. They were accompanied by two other missionary couples that had also been baptized at Azusa Street, Tom and Charlotte Hezmalhalch, and Jacob and Lily Lehman. They continued on to Johannesburg and conducted their first service on May 25, 1908, which about five hundred South Africans attended (Robeck 2006: 276). Lake wrote a letter describing the service as a success:

The Spirit of God fell upon the house in prayer. The natives recognized it just as quickly as we did, and without suggestion fell on their knees to pray as all natives here do, being exceedingly devout. They didn't wait for one another to pray. Out of the five hundred present, two hundred and fifty broke out in prayer aloud at one time. The [Congregational] missionaries who were with us, as observers, of the starchy churchy order, were amazed and astounded because we did not stop the noise...They prayed continuously for three-quarters of an hour. They wept tears, confessed their sins, took off their idolatrous charms, etc., and when the service was over 'they of the circumcision' were astonished. (Cited in Robeck 2006: 276-277)

Lake helped establish the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa and by November of the year he arrived began to publish a paper about their ministry, initially titled *God's Latter Rain* (Robeck 2006: 78). In their first publication the Apostolic Faith Movement established and cemented their connection with the Azusa Street Revival.

Who are we? And what do we teach and practice? We are known as the Apostolic Faith Movement of Johannesburg, S.A., which is included in the great world-wide Holy Ghost Revival which has taken its impetus from the work of Azusa Street Mission, Los Angeles, California, where the Holy Ghost has been poured out on the believers during the past 18 months, and which has already spread throughout the entire world. (Cited in Robeck 2006: 278)

The Apostolic Faith mission grew rapidly in the early twentieth century. It has influenced many African Independent Churches, which can be noted by an affinity for the use of the

word “Apostolic” in many church names, and continues to compose a significant portion of Pentecostals in South Africa today.

Depending on the definition one takes of Pentecostalism, estimates of South Africa’s Pentecostal population could be as high as forty percent of the general population. This is due in large part to African Initiated Churches (AICs), which consist of about “30 per cent of the [South African] population,” according to Allan Anderson (2005: 68). Unlike the Assemblies of God, which also has a considerable presence in South Africa, AICs do not share a religious heritage tracing back to the Azusa Street Revival of 1906. Their inclusion into the Pentecostal movement by scholars is related to their notably ecstatic style of worship and emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Anderson notes their similarity, saying, “almost all of these churches, like Pentecostal churches everywhere, emphasize the power of the Spirit in the church, especially manifested through such phenomena as healing, prophecy, exorcism and speaking in tongues” (2005: 68). Additionally, AICs generally take seriously the concept of spiritual warfare, the belief in spiritual battles between good and evil, in which believers participate through prayer and worship, and by which believers are directly affected.

The rise of AICs in South Africa represents a resistance to North American and European missionizing efforts, though the characteristics of AICs are strikingly similar to those displayed by Pentecostals and Charismatics worldwide. Anderson notes, “The apartheid system with its racism and enforced segregation within early [South African] Pentecostalism drove many Africans into rejecting European forms of Christianity and resulted in the mushrooming of African independent churches” (2005: 70). AICs represent one example that has led to an increasingly broad definition of Pentecostalism, to one that refers to any “Spirit-oriented Christianity” (Anderson 2005: 68). The largest AIC in South Africa, the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), was founded in 1910 by Ignatius Lekganyane in northern Transvaal (Chidester 1992: 134). The growth of the ZCC over the twentieth century is remarkable. With less than a thousand followers in 1925, the church boasted nearly 30,000 members in the early 1940s, then 80,000 in 1960, while by 1970 the church had an estimated following of 200,000, and in 1990 the ZCC reached one million followers (Chidester 1992: 134). The 2001 census showed that just under five

million South Africans claimed affiliation with the ZCC.²² The ZCC practices baptism by immersion, faith healing, manifestations of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues, and believes in the imminent return of Christ (1992: 136).

Though these Pentecostal characteristics are common to many AICs, it cannot be assumed that AICs fit easily into the Pentecostal framework. Different emphases, doctrines, and practices are found throughout AICs, which make it difficult to classify which AICs should or should not be considered a part of the Pentecostal movement. Additionally, there are tensions that exist between classical Pentecostals, Charismatics, and members of AICs. Anderson notes that classical Pentecostals and Charismatics have historically been suspicious of AICs and in some cases “do not consider members of these African churches to be Pentecostal and in many cases reject them as fellow Christians...” (2005: 69). Furthermore, some AICs have tense relations with other AICs in the same manner. These rivalries can be bitter and reflect many divisions among Pentecostals in South Africa today. As Allan Anderson has noted, “The breaking down of these high walls of separation remains to be done” (2005: 69).

American Prosperity Gospel evangelists, such as Jimmy Swaggart and Kenneth Copeland, contributed to these divisions when they visited South Africa and affirmed the Apartheid system to be consistent with “Christian Values” (Anderson 2005: 71). This further spurred the proliferation of AICs, though the message of prosperity has found its way into South African Pentecostalism, including AICs, despite the early application of negative stereotypes to North American and European Prosperity Gospel evangelists.

The success of the Prosperity Gospel in South Africa can be seen in the increasing number of large Mega-Churches such as that represented by Rhema Ministries. Rhema Ministries was established in 1980 by Ray McCauley in Randburg, near Johannesburg. It was founded on Prosperity Gospel teachings that McCauley had obtained from Kenneth Hagin’s Tulsa, Oklahoma-based Rhema Bible Training Center (Anderson 2005: 71). McCauley modeled his church after Hagin’s in every detail, and consequently attracted

²² The census records 4,971,931 people who claimed their affiliation with the Zion Christian Church. These records are maintained by online by Stats South Africa and can be accessed directly at [http://www.statssa.gov.za/timeseriesdata/pxweb2006/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=Religion%20by%20province&ti=Table%3A+Census+2001+by+province%2C+gender%2C+religion+recode+\(derived\)+and++population+group.+&path=../Database/South%20Africa/Population%20Census/Census%202001%20-%20Demarcation%20boundaries%20as%20at%2010%20October%202001/Provincial%20level%20-%20Persons/&lang=1](http://www.statssa.gov.za/timeseriesdata/pxweb2006/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=Religion%20by%20province&ti=Table%3A+Census+2001+by+province%2C+gender%2C+religion+recode+(derived)+and++population+group.+&path=../Database/South%20Africa/Population%20Census/Census%202001%20-%20Demarcation%20boundaries%20as%20at%2010%20October%202001/Provincial%20level%20-%20Persons/&lang=1) last accessed 27 May 2012

comparable figures of attendance for Rhema Ministries. McCauley is a controversial figure in the South African religious landscape, for having supported the Apartheid regime and subsequently appearing before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to apologize for his church's role in furthering prejudicial attitudes and regimes. However, his church remains the largest single Christian congregation in South Africa and has in recent years distanced itself from the American Word of Faith movement (Anderson 2005: 72).

Today, South African Pentecostalism retains many of its characteristic features, while simultaneously on the edge of religious innovation. Pentecostals in South Africa have been characterized as generally apolitical. Anderson finds this still to be the case, noting a "general apathy towards socio-political involvement" (2005: 73). He goes on to elaborate, "To a large extent, [Pentecostal] churches are still divided along the lines of ethnicity and class, and are not very proactive with regard to such severe social problems as the AIDS pandemic and rising poverty and crime" (2005: 87).

There has been, however, recent interest in researching Pentecostalism's effect on economic development. The largest and most comprehensive study was conducted by the Centre for Development and Enterprise, and will be discussed in depth later. Bompani (2010) analyzed the social and economic roles of AICs and found that these churches "play a strong and supportive role among black Africans in a deprived economic situation in which there are few other development agencies or organisations operating on a wider scale" (2010: 310). However, Bompani's article does not go so far as to affirm that AICs promote development in more effective ways than other Christian groups (which is the argument of the CDE about Pentecostalism). Rather, Bompani seeks to recognize the role AICs play in local communities, a role that can serve as a substitute infrastructure where government infrastructures are lacking or ineffective.

In short, Pentecostalism in South Africa, if loosely defined, is a very diverse framework in which to work. While this is true almost anywhere there is a sizable Pentecostal population, the South African case is exceptional. The large numbers of AICs that resemble Pentecostal churches (yet have no formal ties or heritage with the movement) is just one complicating factor when extending the umbrella term "Pentecostalism" in South Africa. Prosperity Gospel is a growing section of

Pentecostalism in Africa, attracting crowds and critics, yet even this specific orientation is increasingly becoming too diverse to generalize. This has prompted some scholars to recognize a distinctly African version of prosperity-oriented Christianity, which Paul Gifford has called “Victorious Living,” that is distinct from the North American import. Furthermore, the diversity of the movement in South Africa is increasing at an astounding rate. In just a five-year period in South Africa from 1996 to 2001, Pentecostal membership jumped 65 percent, compared with just a 10.5 percent increase in population (CDE 2008b: 24). Perhaps an even more telling statistic is that the number of members of Pentecostal and Charismatic evangelical churches that listed their church as “other-Christian” rose by 48 percent in the same time frame (CDE 2008b: 24). This indicates a significant increase in unaffiliated churches “of the Spirit,” about which we know very little.

South Africa: An Economic Perspective

South Africa is a developing nation with Africa’s largest economy. Being a former British colony under white minority rule, followed by the white minority Afrikaner rule of Apartheid, there were many speculations and varying opinions about what economic trajectory South Africa would take after the dismantling of the Apartheid system and the institution of democratic elections. Many feared a fate similar to Zimbabwe, which despite promising signs immediately following the transition to majority rule in the early 1980s, has spiraled out of control due to hyper-inflation, dramatic rises in unemployment and poverty, and a fleeing population. South Africa has not followed the same path as Zimbabwe, and few expect a similar situation to arise in the South African context. However, there are serious pressures facing the South African economy, most notably poverty, access to services, and a large gap between rich and poor.

In 2010, Murray Leibbrandt, Research Chair in Poverty and Inequality at the University of Cape Town, released a report to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France, describing notable data points and characteristics of South Africa’s economy since the end of Apartheid. The paper, “Trends in South African Income Distribution and Poverty since the Fall of Apartheid” (2010), reports that “South Africa’s high aggregate level of income inequality increased between

1993 and 2008. The same is true of inequality within each of South Africa's four major racial groups" (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 4). This demonstrates that if an emerging middle-class is developing, it is doing so at a slower rate than the gap between rich and poor.

The report also noted rising levels of urban poverty, though access to services has steadily increased since the fall of Apartheid. "There have been continual improvements in non-monetary well-being (for example, access to piped water, electricity and formal housing) over the entire post-Apartheid period up to 2008" (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 4). While this had led to significant improvements to well-being, it is strictly relegated to the "non-money-metric picture" (2010: 45).

Possibly the biggest concern revealed by the report is the fact that "measured inequality increased consistently between 1993 and 2008" (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 45). This can be explained, in large part, as due to problems related to the labor market. Leibbrandt explains:

Indeed, this lack of successful integration into the labour market is the reason that many of these households find themselves at the bottom of the income distribution. However, unemployment rates remain high into the higher deciles. This, plus the evidence on employed household members per decile show that having a job on its own is not a guarantee that a household will move into the top deciles. The quality of employment must be considered too. (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 45)

These problems have led to income inequality defined in racial terms. The bottom half of income distribution is "reserved for black South Africans," and irrespective of which definition of a "poverty line" is used one still finds that poverty is "dominated by black South Africans" (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 68).

It should be noted that due to various initiatives, such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), there has been a noticeable decline in "between-race" inequality. However, this is offset by sharply rising numbers of "within-race" inequality and is responsible for pushing aggregate inequality even higher since 1994. Still, "between-race" inequality "remains remarkably high by international norms and its decline has

slowed since the mid 1990s” (Leibbrandt et al., 2010: 68).

Centre for Development and Enterprise (South Africa)

Located in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) is an independent policy center and think tank that conducts research and advocates for policy changes and implementation. Their goal is to make practical policy proposals that will aid South Africa in “[tackling] major social and economic challenges” (CDE 2012). The Center was established in 1995 and funded by several major national and international businesses. Over time the CDE has become a recognized authority on the social and economic issues that pose threats to South African post-Apartheid progress. As described on their website, “CDE is regarded by many including the London Financial Times as the country’s leading policy centre for social and economic development” (CDE 2012).

The executive director of the CDE is currently Ann Bernstein, a former board member of the Development Bank of Southern Africa (1994-2001) (CDE 2012). Bernstein has made several publications, including the recent book, *The Case for Business in Developing Economies* (2010). In addition to core board members, the CDE also has one “International Associate,” Peter L. Berger. Berger had previously collaborated on several occasions with Ann Bernstein, including the 1988 book edited by Peter Berger and Bobby Godsell, *A Future South Africa: Visions, Strategies and Realities*, in which Bernstein contributed the article (co-authored with Godsell), “The Incrementalists” (Berger and Godsell 1988). The book gathered several intellectuals to address the prospects of a post-Apartheid South Africa, before the end of Apartheid was a certainty.

Peter Berger’s first collaboration with the CDE came by way of a seminar led by Berger and hosted by the CDE in January of 1999. Berger’s talk, “Globalisation and Culture: Not Simply the West Versus the Rest,” was subsequently edited and published by the CDE. In the talk Berger makes an allusion to David Martin’s research and findings about Latin American Pentecostalism’s connection with Weber’s Protestant ethic, as published in *Tongues of Fire* (1990) (Berger 1999). With South Africa also experiencing significant growth in Pentecostal membership, it appears that Berger’s reference sparked

interest and subsequently led to a large research initiative to search for similar findings in South Africa.

In March of 2008 the CDE released several publications surrounding the research into Pentecostalism and its potential economic and social role in development. “Faith and Development: A Global Perspective” (2008) was the title of a public lecture delivered by Peter Berger which coincided with the release of the CDE’s findings. As Berger makes clear early in his lecture, the topic of religion and developing economics is intrinsically linked to the increasing disrepute of secularization theory. Naturally, if religion is not declining, but at the very least remaining a consistent factor in the lives of individuals and societies (and in many cases, becoming increasingly relevant), then scholarly interest in the relationship between religion and economics should correlate. The efforts of Peter Berger, David Martin, the Institute on Culture and World Affairs, the CDE, and others represent a renewed push into this field, with focus on the most successful Christian renewal movement, Pentecostalism.

In his talk Berger highlights the principle interests and concerns of the research conducted in South Africa. Of central focus is the relevance of Max Weber’s Protestant ethic to understanding contemporary developments in religion and economies of the so-called Third World. Speaking of Weber’s contribution, Berger says, “Weber’s argument continues to be highly relevant in looking at the cultural prerequisites of development today, regardless of whether he was correct in his historical thesis about the Protestant reformation and its consequences” (Berger 2008: 3). Berger’s task, therefore, is to break down the elements of Weber’s Protestant ethic; determine the characteristics composing his inner-worldly asceticism; and identify where, or rather in whom, these characteristics come together today. Religious affiliation is essentially irrelevant using this method, as Berger is not equating any form of contemporary Protestantism with the Protestant ethic a priori. Rather, he is arguing that a specific component of Weber’s Protestant ethic, inner-worldly asceticism, leads to individual economic improvement, and where this is found en masse, leads to economic development on societal and national levels. Berger describes this process in general terms:

...yet one can readily agree with Weber that such an ethic, whatever its religious legitimations, is likely to create attitudes and habits that are very functional in the early stages of modern development. People who behave in this way are prone to become entrepreneurs. Give them a generation or so, and they are likely to be lifted out of poverty into some sort of middle-class affluence. Furthermore, give a comparable time span in the community or society in which such enterprise expands, and you are likely to see the proverbial take-off into successful capitalist development. (Berger 2008: 4)

The process described above is qualified when Berger subsequently notes that there are many other variables that factor in development. A favorable political and economic climate will enhance the process, but an unfavorable political and economic climate (such as a lack of natural resources, a corrupt government, unjust or prejudiced economic policies, and so on) will likely mute the effect of an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism.

From here Berger goes on to claim that Pentecostalism “exhibits precisely the features of the Protestant ethic that are functional for modern economic development” (Berger 2008: 6). Drawing on research produced by Martin (1990) and historical data on various movements which were imbued with Weber’s inner-worldly asceticism, Berger comfortably asserts that “Pentecostalism should be viewed as a positive resource for modern economic development” (Berger 2008: 6). This lecture largely served to introduce the South African public to the global and historical credibility behind the findings of the CDE.

The CDE also hosted a workshop entitled, “Faith on the Move: Pentecostalism and its Potential Contribution to Development,” in March of 2008, and in August of the same year published a collaborative document based on the proceedings of the workshop. Contributions to the publication came from David Martin, David Maxwell, Matthews A. Ojo, Lawrence Schlemmer, and Bobby Godsell. It is not necessary to elaborate on each of these contributions to the workshop, as the views represent a rather homogenous take on Pentecostalism and the route through which it may aid development. Also, as these were summaries of short talks given at the workshop, the speakers do not go in to great detail. A more detailed analysis is given in the report issued by the CDE, and it can be safely assumed that the above contributors are generally supportive of these findings, the

methodology used, and the trajectories proposed for both South Africa and Pentecostalism.

CDE Report

The principle report on the CDE's research on Pentecostalism in South Africa was published in March of 2008, entitled "Dormant Capital: Pentecostalism in South Africa and Its Potential Social and Economic Role," and written by Lawrence Schlemmer. The report was accompanied with an abridged version, "Under the Radar: Pentecostalism and its Potential Social and Economic Role," which summarized the CDE's findings and was written by Ann Bernstein.

The setting that spurred the focused report by the CDE is described as one in which the South African government has failed and is failing to resolve issues of poverty and poor service delivery. South Africa's poor are therefore urged to curb the "growing sense of entitlement among citizens and communities" and take it upon themselves and their localized communities to bring about an economic change in the country (CDE 2008a: 31). While service delivery has steadily improved over the years (Leibbrandt et al., 2010), it continues to be an important issue for South Africans, and has led to several protests in areas outlying cities, known as townships.

Due to the inefficiencies of the government, the CDE believes alternative sources that can provide social cohesion and stimulate growth must be researched. The CDE has taken the position that South Africa's poor are essentially unaided in their quest to climb out of poverty, saying, "...unless poor communities in South Africa can generate the initiative for self-help and development within their own fabric, they will continue to lag behind the progress of the first economy" (CDE 2008b: 11). The growing Pentecostal movement in South Africa was selected by the CDE as a candidate to stimulate growth "from below," as a grassroots movement that can generate social capital and stability among South Africa's lower classes.

The report attempts to reveal how Pentecostals have been "under the radar" of politicians and public-policy makers while leading a "silent revolution . . . associated with attitudes, habits and dispositions that promote market-led growth" (2008a: 9). The theoretical framework is based almost exclusively on Peter Berger's understanding of contemporary appearances of Weber's inner-worldly asceticism and the likely effects for developing societies, and predicated upon the findings of David Martin (1990; 2002) among Pentecostals in Latin America. Speaking about Berger and Martin, the CDE

admits that “their analyses have provided the hypotheses that have guided CDE’s current research among members of the Pentecostal movement and other denominations in South Africa” (CDE 2008b). Therefore the data generated by the CDE has the task of confirming, or disconfirming, the claims that Pentecostals have “inherited” the Protestant ethic. Economic data clearly points to increases in poverty and a growing gap between rich and poor in South Africa (see Leibbrandt et al., 2010), therefore it is a foregone conclusion that the report will be unable to provide evidence that Pentecostalism is responsible for macro-economic growth in South Africa. An additional issue taken up by the study is to determine whether Pentecostalism in South Africa is generating significant amounts of social and/or “spiritual” capital, which could theoretically lead to economic growth. Data was obtained through questionnaires and interviews of several Pentecostal groups in South Africa.

It should also be noted that the economic climate prior to the publication of the CDE report was somewhat optimistic in South Africa. As the report notes, “South Africa in recent years has recorded sound if not spectacular GDP growth...” (CDE 2008b: 6). In each of the three years prior to CDE publication, South Africa’s GDP growth rate was above five percent, compared with the world average of 3.5 percent in 2005 and around four percent for 2006 and 2007. Few people expected the events that led to a worldwide recession in 2008, which pushed South Africa’s GDP growth rate to just 1.5 percent in 2008 and a dismal -1.7 percent in 2009. Despite the optimistic outlook for South Africa’s general economy, other data suggest that the increased growth led to a further widening of the gap between rich and poor, largely expressed in racial terms.

Classification of Pentecostals

The first and possibly greatest hurdle for any study of Pentecostals is that of classifying exactly who are and who are not Pentecostals. This problem of classification is perhaps even more difficult than usual in the South African context, as already noted, because of the proliferation of African Initiated Churches.

The impact of such diversity is particularly relevant to studies such as that conducted by the Centre for Development and Enterprise. The CDE’s approach is to present their terms of what constitutes “Pentecostal” and then examine groups by geographic location,

which largely represents divisions of race and economic means. Pentecostalism is understood in the CDE report as consisting of churches that can be grouped into four distinct subcategories: community-based churches, classical Pentecostal churches, the New Charismatics, and Mega-Churches. Community-based churches are described as “those that were defined by an inner city, neighbourhood or township base and are associated with the notion of the ‘storefront’ revival centres in the Azusa Street tradition” (2008b: 15). This is not a usual classification in the study of Pentecostalism, and interestingly it is characterized more by location and size, than theology, practice or origin.

Classical Pentecostalism, on the other hand, has long since been a recognized subtype of Pentecostalism, to distinguish between Pentecostals that trace their heritage back to the Azusa Street Revival and those that were born out of the Charismatic Revival. The CDE largely holds to the common interpretation of what constitutes classical Pentecostalism, though it is significant to note that they are characterized by the CDE as being “other-worldly” and, as a result of their premillennial eschatology, largely withdrawn from the world (2008b: 14).

New Charismatics, as the CDE report calls them, largely refers to traditions that emerged from the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s and 1970s, as described in the previous chapter. There is no consensus on what this subtype of Pentecostalism should be called, and, as noted in the previous chapter, there is considerable debate as to whether it should be considered a subtype of Pentecostalism at all. The distinguishing attributes of the New Charismatics, according to the CDE, are a “strong emphasis on the kingdom of God in the present, not the future,” and their rather homogenous socioeconomic make-up of “emerging and aspirant lower middle classes” (2008b: 15).

The fourth subtype listed by the CDE is the Mega-Churches. This label as used here is misleading, since the term, “Mega-Church,” generally refers to, as the name suggests, expansive churches with large congregations, many staff, and big budgets. It also implies a style of Pentecostalism that embraces modern technologies, sophisticated organizational structures, and an affinity with popular culture. However, the CDE appears to have attributed these characteristics to “New Charismatics” and to have used the term “Mega-Church” to refer specifically to prosperity-oriented Pentecostals. Previously I

argued that one could trace the history of the Mega-Church to Aimee Semple McPherson (who was not associated with the Prosperity Gospel), whose innovations and style can still be seen in the modern Mega-Church today. Though it is true that many prosperity-oriented churches are indeed large, and many would qualify as a Mega-Church, these two phenomena are not intrinsically tied together, as I have demonstrated.

Another oddity appears in the description of the Prosperity Gospel's entrance into South Africa, which is characterized as having a significant, and worrying, initial impact on the South African poor after the Second World War, and as having faced considerable criticism from the established churches. But over time, according to the CDE report, Pentecostalism has "generally temper[ed] the prosperity message to reconcile it with more fundamental Christian commitments" and the exploitative strains of the Prosperity Gospel have been reduced to occasional instances (CDE 2008b: 17). This is almost the exact opposite of the account given by Allan Anderson, the South African expert on Global Pentecostalism (see Anderson 2005). It has already been noted above, but we should be reminded of the early Word of Faith (Prosperity Gospel) promoters who came to South Africa and offered public support for the Apartheid regime, causing a backlash that contributed even greater numbers to the already popular African Initiated Churches. Today, churches that teach the Prosperity Gospel (or a variation of it) are more numerous and more vibrant than they have ever been in South Africa (see Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011).

Before concluding their description of the Prosperity Gospel as a derided, diminishing, and tempered group of Pentecostals, the report adds that it is "often agreed" that despite the exploitative aspects of the Prosperity Gospel, there exists an "optimism" that in fact "works independently to energise the congregants, with positive material consequences" (2008b: 17). Firstly, it is inaccurate claim that this perspective of the Prosperity Gospel (as leading to "positive material consequences" for its followers) is "often agreed." In fact, this perspective was first introduced by Peter Berger, and though he has garnered considerable support for his general hypothesis on Pentecostalism and economic development, his allies have yet to come forward in public support of this particular theory regarding the Prosperity Gospel. Secondly, this one-sentence paragraph affirming the positive material consequences of the Prosperity Gospel is oddly situated

directly after a paragraph that describes the prosperity paradigm as one in which adherents' claims to "material success" are "dubious" (2008b: 17).

One last note on the classification of Pentecostals in the CDE report has to do with African Initiated Churches. The report gives a comparatively lengthy description of the characteristics of African Initiated Churches, noting similarities and differences with other forms of Pentecostalism. The report generalizes the membership of AICs in South Africa as "dominantly very poor, lowly educated and communally oriented" and indicates that AICs compose at least some part of the study (2008b: 20). Unfortunately, it is left unclear how AICs fit into the four subtypes of Pentecostalism, as presented by the CDE. Presumably, the unique character, origins, and theologies associated with AICs would warrant an additional subtype in which to situate it. However, no such subtype is formally presented. Considering the participation of ministers and members of various AICs in the study, how then is the reader to understand the place of AICs in the data presented along the fault lines of four subtypes of Pentecostalism? We can assume that AICs would not be found among Pentecostal groups labeled as "classical" by the CDE. That still leaves three subtypes that may or may not feature all, some, or no AICs. For example, the Zion Christian Church of Polokwane is the largest AIC in southern Africa and is renowned for endorsing a form of Prosperity Gospel. It has been called a Mega-Church, though it does not share a direct heritage with the Word of Faith movement. Many other AICs, however, may resemble what the CDE calls a community-based church. Still, the Pentecostal characteristics attributed to AICs are generally identified with caution, noting that AICs either resemble Pentecostalism, or have independently taken on a Pentecostal character. With these considerations, it seems that AICs do not fit comfortably in any of the subtypes presented by the CDE; considering the diversity among AICs, it is just as likely that all AICs would not sit comfortably together in a separate subtype for AICs.

Methodology

The data for the CDE report is comprised of eleven reports from various contributors on specific aspects of the Pentecostal movement in South Africa. Some of these reports contained empirical data obtained through interviews, surveys, and observations by the researchers. These reports were not released to the public, but appear

intermittently in the full report, with statistical data presented where available. However, the sample sizes used for surveys were too small to allow for three-way tabulations that allow for control of selected variables.

By comparing responses given by Pentecostals in “Suburbs” with those given in “Black Areas” the CDE report fails to analyze the differing characteristics of Pentecostal behavior particular to various churches across the spectrum of congregations in these geographic regions. The groups making up those considered to be Pentecostal are labeled as “Old Pentecostal, New Pentecostal, Mainstream Churchgoers, Non-Churchgoers, and Separatists,” which are grouped together under the heading “All Charismatics” (CDE 2008b: 56). It is strange that the CDE went to the effort to create subtypes of the Pentecostal movement, and then rejected these subtypes when comparing data. Instead, it divides Pentecostals into just two categories, “Old Pentecostal” and “New Pentecostal,” and fails to qualify exactly which Pentecostals comprise each of the two groups; nor does the CDE explain why two categories are preferable to the four presented earlier. The comparison as such fails to illuminate which behaviors are indeed characteristics brought forth by the Pentecostal movement in all its forms. The results of surveys show that race is a much stronger determining factor than religious affiliation when assessing personal finances, educational attainment, access to resources, and so on. This has been confirmed in numerous economic studies previously.

Social Capital

An integral part of the CDE report identifies Pentecostalism as a movement imbued with social capital (2008a: 5). Social capital is defined in the study as “supportive resources held by social networks, families, community organizations and the quality of their linkages” (2008b: 52). Francis Fukuyama had previously defined social capital as “an instantiated informal norm that promotes co-operation between two or more individuals” (2001: 7). The term “social capital” has had a nebulous existence in the social sciences, with many scholars debating how one could define it, could interpret it, or if it even exists. Despite these debates (all of which occurred well after Weber’s death), most scholars agree that social capital is an important factor to consider when speaking of economic development. The problem, however, is in defining what constitutes social

capital, and we must not assume all social capital is positive. Keefer and Knack (1997) have argued that horizontal associations (or membership in civic or community groups and organizations) have, at best, an ambiguous effect on economic activity, and furthermore, their studies show that religious groups may actually hinder development by creating a polarizing effect due to their special interests as believers of a particular faith (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey: 2011). This polarizing effect came through in the CDE's own report when it was revealed that a frequent response to questions asked of Pentecostals in Gauteng and Hout Bay about the conditions in the surrounding communities was "that the people deserved to rot in a Hell of their own making" (CDE 2008b: 49).

Measuring social capital is a difficult if not impossible task. Putnam (1993) famously sought to measure social capital in Italy by group membership or "horizontal associations," though this was difficult because statistical data gave no indication about the extent to which anyone was involved in the group. The CDE takes a simpler approach to gauge social capital among Pentecostals—they simply asked participants in the survey how many friends they had. Ironically, it was the "non-churchgoers" in the "black areas" who reported the highest amount of friends. I would suggest social capital cannot be accurately measured by the number of reported friends of respondents in various religious social groups. However, the report stands behind the method used, but suggests that Pentecostals in black areas find themselves besieged in these areas of "social and moral decay" and therefore have fewer friends (2008b: 53).

Levels of social trust are also indicators of social capital. Although the CDE surveys attempt to ascertain levels of social trust among Pentecostals, the results show no remarkable difference when compared with other Christian groups. In the end, the report is forced to admit, "on balance the levels of social capital available to the Pentecostal congregants are mixed and not significantly more than in other denominations" (2008b: 55). This admission, oddly enough, contradicts the central arguments of the full report itself (2008b) and the abridged report (2008a) which intend to uncover the hidden social capital thriving among Pentecostals in South Africa. Despite the concrete evidence and the admission by Lawrence Schlemmer in the full report that Pentecostal social capital is "mixed and not significantly more than in other denominations," the abridged report

shockingly claims that the CDE found “considerable” amounts of social capital available to Pentecostals, and suggests that this social capital may be what fuels a religiously tinted African Renaissance (2008a: 5).

Looking at the Data

As noted above, there are inconsistencies between the claims of the CDE and the data presented in their report to substantiate these claims.

The study presents responses by Pentecostals and “Mainstream” church groups to questions about the impact of their faith on their personal economic situation. At first glance this would seem to produce more relevant results. However, there are problems here as well. The group in which more members (35 percent) reported that their faith had led to large or small improvements in their personal economic situation were the “Separatists” (2008b: 45). Unfortunately, this is yet another religious classification which is introduced without qualification. We therefore do not know who, or which groups, compose “Separatists.” Furthermore, this information was obtained by asking open questions to a considerably small sample size, and does not represent actual economic improvement, only believers’ impressions about their faith’s impact on individual economic situations. The data shows comparable impressions among other mainstream denominations in black areas, “suggesting that the positive economic impact is not limited to the Pentecostal churches” (2008b: 45). However, the data does not point to any positive economic impact either, only the perceived benefit. Because these numbers cannot be compared with similar data from other religious groups, there is no measuring stick to determine if these numbers are above or below average. Other statistics are reported about believers’ impressions about various aspects of life improvement resulting from their faith. These statistics are subject to the same critiques as above.

The data also has trouble matching claims made in the report when addressing Pentecostals’ propensity to save money, one of the characteristics vital to the comparison with Weber’s Calvinists. Data gathered from “the suburbs” actually revealed “very high savings rates among non-churchgoers” (2008b: 60). One possible explanation to account for lower rates of savings among Pentecostals is subsequently written in bold: “Contributions to the church absorb significant amounts that might otherwise be available

for saving” (2008b: 60). In this case, the report directly contradicts the hypothesis that Pentecostals are inclined to save more money.

The remainder of the report is largely focused on “soft data” obtained by asking church members from various groups their opinions on such things as work, lifestyle, saving money, and entrepreneurship, among others. Comparatively, statistics related to “hard data” form a small component of the report. While Pentecostal opinions about the importance of working hard and saving money may have some significance, the CDE has construed these opinions as representing actual facts. In other words, asking someone if they think it is important to work hard does not prove *ipso facto* that the person works hard. It proves nothing more than that person’s opinion about working hard. Because there is no hard data in the CDE report that gives indication about the actual work ethic, instances of delayed gratification, and propensities to save money of Pentecostals, the CDE’s claim that Pentecostals share an equivalent to Weber’s ethic of inner-worldly asceticism is baseless and unsubstantiated.

However, there are two lines of argumentation made by the CDE that are potentially interesting for the question of Pentecostalism and economic development, though again, the results are inconclusive. However, neither of these arguments—promotion of entrepreneurship and the affirming, “You can do it!” message—are related to Weber’s Protestant ethic. The CDE argues that Pentecostal churches inculcate confidence in their adherents through a positive, affirming message. They assume that these positive attitudes are important for motivating Pentecostals to see potentialities even where their realities are depressive and oppressive. There is a basic logic to this that easily garners support, though unfortunately the CDE does not undertake a serious investigation into the methods of instilling confidence, the levels of confidence among various denominations, and the effects of the positive message. Their argument stops at the simple deduction I have already presented.

The CDE also argues that Pentecostals are disproportionately entrepreneurial and that there is an emphasis on entrepreneurship in South African Pentecostalism that has a positive impact on economic development. It is certainly true that some Pentecostal churches emphasize and promote entrepreneurial activity, as is evidenced by church-established business schools. This phenomenon has been more closely associated with the

Prosperity Gospel, which features only clandestinely in the CDE report. It may also be true that Pentecostals have above average rates of entrepreneur members, though the CDE did not obtain data to substantiate this. Despite being an important component of their argument, the CDE failed to investigate the rates of entrepreneurship among Pentecostals, compare this rate with other religious groups and national averages, and detail the direct effect of this entrepreneurship on economic development. While this aspect of the CDE argument has the most potential, it must also be considered unsubstantiated.

Forming a Critique

As should be clear by now, there is no substantial evidence to support Berger's hypothesis that Pentecostalism is a positive force to drive development. This is a necessary requirement before the hypothesis can be validated or rejected. However, there are some issues that should be addressed related to the theoretical framework. Some of these issues have been taken up directly by scholars such as Birgit Meyer (2007; 2010), while some have been taken up indirectly through work on a related but separate topic (such as Colin Campbell 1983; 1987). However, many scholars have deferred to weigh in on the debate at all.

The first and most obvious approach one might take when critiquing Berger's hypothesis is to analyze the simplistic use of Weber's *Protestant Ethic* as a model for promoting development in today's world. As previous studies have definitively shown, Weber's thesis was heavily dependent upon the context examined. Birgit Meyer has noted, "if it was Weber's concern to highlight the role of Protestantism in bringing about capitalism, today the question is more complicated..." (Meyer 2007: 11). The globalized, localized, and glocalized world has created a myriad of identities "entangled with the culture of neoliberalism" (Meyer 2007: 12). Jean Comaroff speaks to this "entanglement" when she says, "these shifts in the nature of religious life are not adequately seen as either 'models of' or 'for' new socio-economic forms; rather they are intrinsically, dialectically entailed with the economic and technological transformations of the current moment" (2008:14).

We must therefore ask ourselves, what has the “spirit of capitalism” become in the twenty-first century? Colin Campbell argued that there was an antithetical, yet complementary side to the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, namely the “Romantic ethic” and the “spirit of consumerism” (Campbell 1983). For capitalism to take off there had to be a consumer for every producer, and Romanticism provided this. Whereas the Protestant ethic’s significance in the development of capitalism was to make labor as an end in itself, Romanticism’s equally important contribution was to make consumption an end in itself during the Industrial Revolution (Campbell 1983). Others, such as Daniel Bell (1976) identified the consumer culture taking shape in the 1950s when a shift away from ascetic individualism toward hedonistic individualism occurred, arguing effectively that Weber’s inner-worldly asceticism has been replaced by an inner-worldly hedonism. These are all important perspectives to consider before we can import Weber’s theory about what happened in the eighteenth century and assume its relevance for the twenty-first century. Even if we can accept that Pentecostals do possess an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism (or a functional equivalent), we have absolutely no understanding of its relevance for producing economic growth in today’s globalized world.

Related to this, it has yet to be asked, “What do we mean by development?” Throughout Berger’s work on the Pentecostal ethic for development, as well as in the work of others working on the same issue, the term “development” is never defined. It appears as if they take for granted a shared understanding of development (economic, social, spiritual, or otherwise). This understanding presumes that development comes without its own baggage, its own troubled history. However, this is indeed not the case. We are never told if we should look at GDP numbers, unemployment statistics, surveys related to well-being, child mortality rates, or any other specific index that will determine when and how development is taking place. We may further ask, “What are acceptable sacrifices to make at the cost of this development?” After recording the genealogies of Pentecostalism and Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic*, it appears there has been an underlying genealogy that is at least equally relevant to the Pentecostal ethic for development; that is the history of development.

Another glaring issue that seems to have no easy solution is the problem of classification of Pentecostals. As previously noted, the expanse and diversity of Pentecostalism make it difficult to find overarching characteristics. If Weber's theory was heavily reliant on the historically and geographically specific case in which his Protestants were situated, we must also consider that a group as diverse as Pentecostals would be unlikely to share such specific qualities as required by an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. They do not share a common theology, common practices, or a common socioeconomic status. On what basis can we accept that they share an inner-worldly ascetic ethic? If some Pentecostals are determined to share a modern version of the Protestant ethic, then there are undoubtedly many contributing factors that are context specific.

This problem can be illustrated by the ambiguous approach to the role of prosperity-oriented Pentecostal churches. I have identified six approaches to the Prosperity Gospel in the works of various supporters of Berger's hypothesis: 1) It is recalcitrant toward economic development and reprehensible to other Pentecostals (CDE); 2) It is not prevalent and/or significant, and this has been said explicitly (Berger) and implicitly (CDE) when studies place them on the "fringe" of Pentecostalism (see also McCloud 2004); 3) It will instill an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism in spite of exploitation and belief in magic, and therein fulfill its promises (Berger 2008); 4) It will lead to disillusioned followers that will in all likelihood turn to more progressive forms of Pentecostalism (Miller and Yamamori 2007); 5) Prosperity teaching is only one facet amid many progressive features which are benefitting the communities in which they are situated (CDE); 6) A combination of one or more of the above mentioned approaches (Berger, CDE). This demonstrates a lack of consensus on the nature of the Prosperity Gospel, the prevalence of prosperity-oriented teachings, the significance of prosperity-oriented teachings, and the effect of prosperity-oriented teachings on individual and collective behaviors.

In general, the Prosperity Gospel is not given adequate attention by any of the scholars promoting Berger's hypothesis. This could be related to the negative stereotype associated with the prosperity message, which perhaps makes some apprehensive about approaching the subject altogether. Intellectuals and the media have rarely portrayed the

Prosperity Gospel favorably. *The Atlantic* magazine ran an article in late 2009 with the title “Did Christianity Cause the Crash?” The “crash” referred to is the worldwide economic recession that began in 2008, and the article reveals that Christianity here refers to the Prosperity Gospel. Peter Berger is the only one of the proponents to openly discuss the Prosperity Gospel’s relationship with development, essentially arguing that adherents also share in Weber’s inner-worldly ascetic ethic, despite messages that encourage more spending than saving. This attempts to demonstrate that the Prosperity Gospel has a covert affinity with the “spirit of capitalism,” though the message of prosperity has a clear, overt affinity with the “spirit of consumerism,” which Campbell has demonstrated is the “antithesis to Weber’s thesis” (Campbell 1983: 293).

However, the increasing popularity of prosperity-oriented Christianity makes it an essential issue when discussing Pentecostalism in developing nations. In Cameroon, Pentecostalism is exclusively associated with a message of prosperity (Mbe 2002). Paul Gifford has noted similar trends across Africa, saying that in Ghana, for example, “almost all charismatic churches (and indeed many beyond them) would hold some form of the [Word of Faith] gospel” (Gifford 2004: 48). This has led him to call for a new term, “Victorious Living,” to describe this phenomenon that has quickly taken a distinctly African flavor (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011).

Although no statistical data exists on the prevalence of Prosperity teachings, it is certainly the most visible strand of Pentecostalism in Africa, occupying much of the Christian media and boasting the largest church auditoriums on the continent. The pervasiveness of these teachings is so intense that it led the Cameroonian Nyansako-Ni-Nku, President of the All Africa Conference of Churches, to declare that a “disease called Pentecostalism” is infecting Africa, and by Pentecostalism he means the Prosperity Gospel (Cole 2007).

Yet, it has been demonstrated that Prosperity Gospel churches are among the most active in promoting entrepreneurship (see Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011). It is occasionally overtly encouraged, as is the case of Winners’ Chapel in Lagos, Nigeria, where the speaker often encourages the congregation to turn to a neighbor and ask, “Have you started your own business yet?” (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011). It may well be that the Prosperity Gospel (and its variants) carry some valuable components for

improving individual economic situations, but if this is the case, it should be accurately measured against those aspects which encourage irrational financial management.

The final critique I would like to raise pertains to the general perspective of those that support Peter Berger's hypothesis. Historically, studies of Pentecostalism have revolved around a dialectic with society at large, though this dialectic has been defined in different ways. Most commonly the relationship is specified as one between Pentecostals and modernity, which Robert Mapes Anderson (1979) has articulated as a paradoxical relationship. Whether this relationship is mutually beneficial, antagonistic, or described in other ways, it seems clear that Pentecostalism requires this dialectic to survive. In early twentieth-century America we see spikes in Pentecostal membership and the rise of Pentecostal celebrities, reflective of and strongly correlated with major social changes, stemming from economic depression and war, among others. Where Pentecostals collectively improved their economic condition, Pentecostalism went through significant changes and alterations in style and message. This dialectic, while complex and not fully understood, stands as a constant in a movement characterized best by continuous change, adaptation, and renewal.

Peter Berger's hypothesis does not adequately acknowledge a dialectic between Pentecostalism and society, or Pentecostalism and modernity. Rather, it offers a strict functionalist interpretation of the effect of ideas on collective action and economics, which has been thoroughly rejected by those seeking to duplicate Weber's results in alternative settings. Ironically, Peter Berger has written probably the most brilliant piece of work ever written on the dialectical relationship between humans and society in his *The Social Construction of Reality* (with Luckmann 1966), and then has elaborated on this dialectic with specific reference to religion in *The Sacred Canopy* (1967). Though he has departed from his stance on secularization as presented in these two books, they remain extremely insightful and relevant works.

Conclusion

I cannot entirely disagree with Peter Berger's general hypothesis about the positive effects of Pentecostalism on development. However, a thorough look at the CDE study reveals several flaws and contradictions which conclusively invalidate their claims.

Besides damaging the credibility of the study itself, the data presented largely points to inconclusive results. Consequently, the results of the CDE are speculative and offer little value in determining the validity of Peter Berger's hypothesis. Dismissing the CDE report is probably more beneficial to Berger's hypothesis than accepting it. This is because data in the full report indicate that Pentecostals have less than average social capital and save less than average amounts of money. If these results were taken factually, then they actually point to the opposite conclusion reached by Berger, namely that Pentecostals negatively affect development. However, the inconsistencies of the report render it largely untenable and should be dismissed altogether.

In light of this, it is my conclusion that it is at this time indeterminable what effect Pentecostalism is having on social and economic development. There are several perspectives that have been poorly addressed, and others not addressed at all. Chief among these is the rising presence of the Prosperity Gospel in Africa. I am most critical of the treatment of Prosperity Gospel as it has featured in the recent works of Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori (2007), Peter Berger (2008, 2009), and the CDE report (2008a, 2008b). Whereas there seems to be a theme running through the aforementioned works with regard to Pentecostalism's affinity for an inner-worldly asceticism, there is a lack of consensus about how to approach the issue of Prosperity Gospel. Increasingly, Prosperity Gospel teachings are taking center stage in African Charismatic/Pentecostal Christianity. It may even be the case that Prosperity teachings are overtaking the Pentecostal movement itself and moving beyond Pentecostalism to envelop various forms of Christianity in Africa. However, the prevalence of the movement is generally downplayed among proponents of a Pentecostal inner-worldly asceticism. It is sometimes referred to as a concern for development, other times referred to as largely irrelevant to development, and yet other times regarded as beneficial to development (The CDE report represents all of these positions in the same document!).

On another note, the CDE report has a clear emphasis on "economic self-reliance" and points to the problematic "growing sense of entitlement" after South Africa's transition to democracy (CDE 2008a: 33). Consider this statement in the abridged report: "Too many South Africans seem to perceive their role as that of waiting for the government to deliver, with far less emphasis on what it is that citizens should be doing

for themselves” (CDE 2008a: 33). This could (and perhaps should) be interpreted as typical neoliberal capitalist rhetoric, a charge that has been neither confirmed nor denied by the CDE or Peter Berger. However, this perspective on South Africans is unsettling. It has been proven, and is generally accepted, that the Apartheid system was directly responsible for unjust wealth distribution in favor of white South Africans, a fact that the transition to democracy has yet to resolve. Considering South Africa’s history, is not some “sense of entitlement” warranted by those who continue to be oppressed by a prejudicial system that has been dismantled for almost two decades? If the government was directly and actively responsible for their economic situation, why should we suggest it is wrong or lazy to expect a new, democratic government to right these wrongs? One of the shameful legacies of the neoliberal capitalist invention of the “American Dream” is the inversion of the mantra “If you work hard you will be rich and succeed” to the myth and fallacy that “If you are poor and have failed then you must not have worked hard” and “If you are rich and successful then you inevitably worked harder than most.” The CDE report has effectively charged the poor with the responsibility of escaping poverty, and offered Pentecostalism as the means to do this. The CDE claims that this responsibility was defaulted upon them by an ineffectual government. While this may indeed be the case, is the government then excused responsibility for alleviating the needs of the poor? Will it then be fair to blame the poor’s “sense of entitlement” for their inability to escape poverty? I do not mean to construe, or misconstrue, the CDE’s intentions; I merely argue that such an emphasis is unnecessary for the CDE’s argument, and is heavily weighted with innuendo that points away from the central issue under analysis by the CDE.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Historical Patterns and Prospects for the Future

This thesis has presented three sociological theories of Weberian origin: church-sect theory, secularization theory and what I have called the Pentecostal ethic for development. Each theory has been presented in the context of the birth and development of the Pentecostal movement. It was argued that church-sect theory became untenable, in part, due to studies that featured Pentecostals. It was also argued that secularization theory fell into disrepute, in part, because of the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in the latter half of the twentieth century, including the Charismatic Revival of the 1960s and 1970s. The Pentecostal ethic for development has recently emerged in the sociology of religion, and has gained a considerable following among respected social theorists and theologians. The final chapter of this thesis argues that the Pentecostal ethic for development, specifically claims that Pentecostals are imbued with Max Weber's ethic of inner-worldly asceticism and therefore offer a solution to contemporary economic problems in the developing world, are unsubstantiated. Each of these three theories have roots in the work of Max Weber, though it has been shown that over time they acquired significant departures from the work and intentions of Max Weber. This thesis has been structured loosely along an historical chronology to demonstrate that a recurring pattern is evident.

Some elements of this pattern will be visible in all three cases, while others may only be visible in the cases of church-sect and secularization theories. This is due to the recent emergence of a Pentecostal ethic for development, and it is suggested that this recent hypothesis is on a similar trajectory and therefore may suffer a similar fate as church-sect and secularization theories. This pattern is best understood by recognizing the commonalities to all three theories. These commonalities can be seen on three distinct planes: origin, application and acceptance.

Origin

Church-sect theory, secularization theory, and the Pentecostal ethic for development all have roots in the works of Max Weber. However, the relationship between each of these theories and the work of Max Weber is not a straightforward one. For this reason we should more rightly refer to them as quasi-Weberian. Church-sect theory made use of Weber's "ideal types" (*Idealtypus*) as a means to understand the nature of various religious groups, how these groups operate, and why they are formed. However, it has been demonstrated that this use was beyond the scope intended by Weber, taking what was a heuristic device and transforming it into a taxonomic model.

Secularization theory also pays homage to the Weberian tradition, though Max Weber never proposed a theory of secularization. Rather he noted processes of rationalization, which he believed were inherent to processes of modernization (Warner 2010). Weber undoubtedly believed that the secularization of the world was probable, if not inevitable, yet he refrained from developing a theory of how this would come about. His work on rationalization as demonstrated in *The Protestant Ethic* was employed to describe the development of the "spirit of capitalism," and was not used to form a theoretical model for secularization. His vague allusions to secularization should be indicative of his reluctance to form such a model.

Lastly, the recent emergence of a Pentecostal ethic for development draws directly on Weber's *Protestant Ethic* to provide a theoretical model for economic development in the twenty-first century. Led by Peter Berger, the trend recognizes Pentecostals as possessing an equivalent to what Weber described as an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism. However, Weber's thesis was situated in a specific historical context, a factor that has been shown by many to be a crucial factor in explaining the validity of Weber's thesis and the problems of duplicating the theory (Coleman 1968; Stokes 1975). This is largely disregarded in the current hypothesis, and consequently the hypothesis has yet to find substantial evidence to validate the claims.

Application

In each of the three theories, Pentecostalism has made a significant appearance in the various attempts of application. Church-sect theory initially benefited from research of

Pentecostal groups, as it seemingly confirmed the nature and trajectory long associated with “sects.” However, Benton Johnson’s (1961) study of Pentecostal groups demonstrated that they were socializing in dominant American values, contrary to common assumptions. This played a part in Johnson’s critique of church-sect theory, a critique that was followed by many more from other scholars, and led to the eventual abandonment of the theory that had become too complex and ambiguous to be of any use.

Secularization theory has enjoyed widespread acceptance among intellectuals, however sociologists increasingly had trouble substantiating claims that religious belief was on the decline. The most glaring contradiction to assumptions held by secularization theorists was the increasing popularity and spread of Pentecostalism, particularly in the so-called Third World. This also included many new forms of Pentecostalism that were thriving despite sociologists’ claims that religion was fading.

The third hypothesis, led by Peter Berger, makes use of Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* to confront Pentecostalism directly. Whereas the former theories featured appearances by Pentecostalism, this hypothesis was formulated specifically for Pentecostalism. Therefore the significant role Pentecostalism played in the trajectories of the previous two theories appears as accidental, but here we see this hypothesis as intrinsically tied to the Pentecostal movement.

Acceptance

It has been shown that church-sect theory was in a continuous stage of development, until it reached a point that it suffered from its own complexity, in addition to the increasing discovery of exceptional cases, such as represented by the Pentecostals. Until that point, however, there was no alternative that organized religious involvement and simultaneously classified religious behavior. The theory was largely embraced by the community of scholars studying the formation and trajectories of religious groups, and used it to explain the relationship between different types of religious groups and society. Moreover, it created a paradigm in which one could work on a variety of perspectives pertaining to religious grouping and belief. Coleman (1968), bemoaning the widespread criticism of church-sect theory that had developed in the 1960s, called it one of the two

“mainstays of continuity of thought concerning the inter-relationship between religion and society” (1968: 55).

Likewise, scholars of religion easily accepted secularization theory. Hadden (1987) argued that it appeared more like an ideology than a theory, and called for its desacralization. Secularization was largely taken-for-granted by intellectuals, as is evident by the fact that it has received more attention since many scholars have rejected it than it did when it was at its height of popularity in the 1960s.

It is difficult to say to which heights Peter Berger’s Pentecostal ethic for development will soar. It has the support of David Martin (1990; 2002), whose studies in Latin America provided the initial foundation on which the hypothesis was built. The Centre for Development and Enterprise supported it fully, even after data failed to confirm the hypothesis. Studies in Russia and Ukraine were carried out under Christopher Marsh and Artyom Tonoyan (2009), and a global study by Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori (2007) was constructed along similar vein. Additionally the hypothesis has gained the consistent financial backing from the John Templeton Foundation to carry out various research initiatives. Among these proponents, however, there seems to be little diversity in the manner in which the hypothesis is approached. Weber’s Protestant ethic is accepted as the model for stimulating economic growth, and little effort is made to qualify this. This is odd considering the history reviewed here, a history marked by failed attempts to apply the Protestant ethic as a model for economic growth. In this way, it might be said that the Protestant ethic thesis is taken-for-granted, and functioning in much the same way as secularization theory once did.

Prospects for the Protestant Ethic

In light of the pattern just presented, there are several questions which arise. Firstly, we may ask if the Protestant ethic is reemerging as an ideology, as might be suggested by the way it is employed in the works of those supporting a Pentecostal ethic for development. Only time will tell, though currently it remains contained to a fairly tight network surrounding Peter Berger’s associates and funding from the Templeton Foundation. How far this network will extend, however, is unknown. There have been some attempts to critique the developments directly, most notably Birgit Meyer (2007; 2010) and Paul

Gifford (2011). Others, such as Joel Robbins (2010), have acknowledged the developments with a skeptical eye. There is also a plethora of preexisting work that would seem contrarian to the hypothesis and offer an alternative to the Pentecostal ethic for development, such as that of Jean and John L. Comaroff (1998) on “Occult Economies.” Another alternative framework has been provided by Manuel Vasquez (2009), who situates Pentecostal belonging located both globally and in the afterlife. In this framework Max Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* is interpreted “materialistically” to describe a Pentecostal characteristic that he identifies as a “polymorphous pneumatic materialism” (Vasquez 2009: 276).

Another question that arises from the pattern presented here is related to the trajectory of the Protestant ethic thesis. In the other examples, church-sect and secularization theories, we saw great success followed by mass abandonment. We must remember, however, that the Protestant ethic had already been relegated to the historical context in which it was originally employed due to the repeated failures to demonstrate similar results. This new trend must be seen as a reemergence of the theory after a relatively significant period since it was last used as a model for economic growth. We can surmise, however, that like church-sect and secularization theories, without substantial evidence to support its claims, or the discovery of evidence to refute these claims, its fall from intellectual praise will be swift.

With the failure of three grand theories we must also question the relevance of Weber’s work in the contemporary era. This, however, should be done with trepidation, as one does not quickly cast aside the father of an academic discipline. This thesis has shown that these theories, as they developed, were quasi-Weberian and had significantly departed from the intentions and work of Max Weber the sociologist. The primary contribution from Weber, let us remember was an introduction into the place of ideas in the causal web of collective action. This is, and will always be, the essence of sociology of religion. Lachmann noted this was still the case despite the frustrations of applying Weberian models in new contexts, saying “there are thus good reasons, in the study of human action, to give careful attention to the plan which guides and directs action” (Lachmann 1971: 7). However, it seems there needs to be a reinvestigation into which plans are predominantly involved in directing action today. Max Weber predicted that

religious ideas, which were originally responsible for creating a “spirit of capitalism,” would become increasingly irrelevant as the “spirit of capitalism” could and would function without them. As Bethany Moreton has noted, “...God did not die, but rather was incorporated into the very structure of secularism itself” (Moreton 2009: 86-87). The ascetic ethics of Protestantism were now ingratiated with the spirit of capitalism, which is arguably more pervasive than Protestantism has ever been. In any case, Protestantism no longer has a monopoly on the virtues of hard work and delayed gratification. Moreton notes, “This worldliness in turn, Weber argued, undermined the original spiritual motivation, and gradually the habits of thrift, diligence, self-control, and industry took a life of their own” (Moreton 2009: 87).

In this context, we can rightly question the relevance of an inner-worldly ascetic ethic, if it exists, in the Pentecostal movement. What impact could an inner-worldly ascetic ethic have in the contemporary economic climate? Moreton has further argued that the Protestant ethic thesis was a self-destructing ethic that simply could not power the economic system *ad infinitum*. “According to this narrative, the Protestant ethic then ran up against mass consumption in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Prudence could not power an economic order built on the multiplication of desires” (Moreton 2009: 87). Consumer capitalism has since transferred the calling that Weber’s Protestants found in work to a calling that was found in leisure. In other words, “Salvation gave way to self-realization” (Moreton 2009: 87).

These cultural changes have inevitably altered the way individuals approach work and economic activity, and likewise affected the way economic growth can be achieved. However, taking these changes into account does not solve the conundrum when faced with the application of Weberian principles to the current economic climate. The central problem is the misuse of *The Protestant Ethic* as a functional tool for promoting growth. Lachmann noted this in 1971 when he stated,

Economic growth is of course a subject still very much in fashion. But it is gradually coming to be recognized that growth processes are processes of historical change, that they are prompted by many forces, not all of them economic, and that, whatever may be the best way of studying them, it is

impossible to reduce the rich variety of forces in operation to one simple analytical model. (Lachmann 1971: 5)

It also seems fairly obvious to the Weberian scholar that Max Weber himself was not promoting a strictly functionalist interpretation of religious belief and economic growth. Rather, situated in a long running debate between the materialist and idealist perspectives, Weber demonstrated the potential that belief can affect and shape social and economic processes. However, it was not Weber's intention to provide a model for social reality in which one religious belief is inserted and capitalist enterprise is retrieved. Weber's work, in the intellectual context of his day, added complexity to the question about what shapes societies and economies, not simplification. However, Weberian sociology has largely tended toward simplifying and universalizing Weber's concepts, which has consistently resulted in failures to apply his principles in the twentieth and now, twenty-first centuries.

Furthermore, we must ask ourselves what type of growth is being called for, in which sectors, to the benefit of whom, and in what manner will it be achieved? These questions have been completely swept under the carpet in the current discourse put forth by Peter Berger in a Pentecostal ethic for development, and have been largely unspoken by those writing with Max Weber's ghost over their shoulders since *The Protestant Ethic*. Kevin Lewis O'Neill's book *City of God: Christian Citizenship in Postwar Guatemala* (2009) exposes the privatizing and individualizing effect Pentecostalism is having on social and economic issues in Guatemala. The result is that it "releases the nation state, multinational corporations, and organized crime from being held accountable for, among other things, unsafe streets and a faltering economy" (O'Neill 2009: 4). Furthermore O'Neill finds that while Pentecostalism is providing Guatemalans with a "deep sense of meaning," it simultaneously "[limits] the avenues through which they can act" (2009: 4). This seems as a paradox, particularly because it is often taken for granted, and argued by Peter Berger, that an increased sense of social and economic agency translates into actual increased agency. However, O'Neill's work serves as a poignant objection to this assumption.

Reclaiming the Dialectic in the Study of Pentecostalism

Pentecostals have been described and characterized in many different ways with regard to their relationship to society. For much of its history this relationship was described with one or another form of deprivation theory. Recent work has rejected this approach, as the increasing middle class constituency of Pentecostalism makes traditional deprivation theories untenable. However, this focus on a dialectical relationship, exemplified in the work of Robert Mapes Anderson (1979), is consistent with traditional sociological approaches. As Stephen Hunt notes, “the sociology of religion, despite its contrasting and divergent approaches, has historically and primarily focused on the dialectical relationship that religion has with wider society...” (Hunt 2010: 179).

The Pentecostal ethic for development represents a radically different approach to the study of Pentecostalism. Firstly, while Pentecostals have been described negatively and sympathetically, they have rarely been described positively. There are numerous scholars that have approached the study of Pentecostalism objectively, with tact and sensitivity, but for several decades the sociologist has refrained from value-based judgments regarding religious beliefs and practices. Peter Berger maintains that his work is not value-based, but rather an objective look at the consequences of the Pentecostal movement. Generally, his personal work reflects this disposition, though one wonders how long these consequences can be maintained without data to support them. Secondly, this recent trend is void of the dialectical relationship that has defined the sociological study of religion. It appears with little insight into who Pentecostals of today are, and societal factors have made Pentecostalism attractive for them. Peter Berger’s earlier work provided incredible insight into the dialectical relationship between humanity and society, in *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) and *The Sacred Canopy* (1967). Yet, these insights seem to be strangely absent in the Pentecostal ethic for development. The dialectical relationship attributed to Pentecostals and their environment has for so long centered around deprivation theories, which has shown to be untenable. Consequently there appears to be a void when it comes to unraveling a Pentecostal dialectic with society today. The approach is likely best undertaken through focused case-studies, such as that by Simon Coleman (2000) which brilliantly delves into the “culture”

of global Charismatic Christianity through the analysis of the transnational Swedish Word of Faith movement.

The primary lesson to be learned from the ghost of Max Weber through the hindsight of more than a century of Weberianism is that the observation of a correlation, even a direct causation, is not grounds to form and apply a theory. Society is immensely more complex than we believe, perhaps more than we can comprehend. Models and broad theories have historically raised more questions than answers, and therefore should be approached with trepidation. The nature and processes of society are not static; therefore sociology cannot afford to be endlessly devoted to any theory of social processes. Above all, we would do well to heed the warning, which can be read as a challenge, of Edward Shils, who said:

It is scarcely to be expected that American sociologists would make contributions to the sociological study of religion along the lines of Max Weber's *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*. American sociologists are usually too poorly educated historically and their religious musicality is too slight to interest themselves in such problems. (Shils 1947: 23-24)

Throughout this thesis I have sought to synthesize two histories which speak volumes to the current state and future of the study of Pentecostalism and the sociology of religion. It is the conclusion of this thesis that in order to avoid fulfilling the prophecy given by Shils above, sociologists must peer into their history so that a pattern of ideological thinking and the resulting failures can be avoided.

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Chapter 5

Max Weber's Pentecostal Ethic for Development?

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Chapter 6

Conclusion: Historical Patterns and Prospects for the Future

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